

A Critical Study of Dewey's Theory of Moral Values

Thesis submitted for the Ph. D. Degree

by

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P R E F A C E.

Our aim in this thesis will be critically to study Dewey's theory of moral values with a view to discovering how far the naturalistic, biological point of view, as this is conceived by Dewey, is capable, when applied in the realm of Ethics, of adequately interpreting the facts of moral life.

For this purpose, we shall begin with a critical study of Dewey's biological psychology, which we shall find in the end to be responsible for his entire ethical theory, followed by a critical study of his nominalistic Logic, which, in our opinion, is the result of ^{his} psychology and comes to determine his views in Ethics. These two sections, then, since they provide a criticism of the basic ideas on which Dewey's ethical theory is built, will be dealt with at some length. The third and fourth sections will be concerned with a statement and criticism of Dewey's ethical theory.

The references throughout will be chiefly to Dewey's two latest books, Human Nature and Conduct, and Reconstruction in Philosophy, since these seem to provide all that is distinctive¹ in his earlier writings and represent, in addition, the most recent formulations of his philosophical thinking.

. with the exception of his Outline of Ethics (1891) which is Hegelian in point of view and evidently written before Dewey had come to form views which can be called distinctively his own.


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predilections he & SECTION 1. capacity for immediate apprehension.

These two doctrines which, when applied to the realm of morals,
PSYCHOLOGY.

Since our interest in Dewey's psychology is because of the light which it throws on the fundamental assumption on which Dewey's ethical theory is based, we shall concern ourselves here with discussing only such of his psychological doctrines as seem to have this important bearing. The doctrines which we shall find to have such determining influence on his ethical theory seem in the last analysis to centre round his view regarding the knowing aspect of consciousness, whether this knowing be logical or moral, and it is therefore with his view regarding this aspect of consciousness that we shall primarily concern ourselves in the sequel.

The psychology which Dewey adopts is frankly naturalistic. It is, as he himself tells us, "what is now termed behaviourist psychology"¹. He finds the need for "the development of a psychology based upon biology"² and this is what he seeks to supply in his view regarding human nature. Our thesis is that it is because of such naturalistic, biological, predilections, that Dewey fails to see that knowing in general - and moral knowing in particular, for that is our chief concern - is not a secondary and derived, but a primary and ultimate aspect of human consciousness, and that  also because of his biological predilections/

1. Essays in Experimental Logic, p.VI.

2. Reconstruction in Philosophy, pp.83 & 4.

predilections he denies the capacity for immediate apprehension. These two doctrines which, when applied to the realm of morals, would seem to signify an overlooking of the moral attitude as an ultimate characteristic of the human consciousness, and a denial of the capacity for immediate apprehension of moral value, we shall find, in the end, ^{to} determine his entire ethical theory. It is these two doctrines regarding knowing in general together with the very inadequate account of the self which Dewey gives us and which we shall later find to underlie a certain interpretation of his moral criterion, which will be the objects of our enquiry in the first part of this section under the heading, Knowing in general. The latter part of the section will be concerned with Dewey's account of the moral consciousness, more especially with showing his failure - in line with his theory of knowing in general - to take account of the ultimate moral attitude and how this failure comes to prominence in his account of moral obligation.

1. Knowing in General.

The fundamental tenet in Dewey's psychology is expressed by saying "that habits formed in process of exercising biological aptitudes are the sole agents of observation, recollection, foresight and judgment: a mind or consciousness or soul in general which performs these operations is a myth",¹ and that knowing is an activity which has been hit upon accidentally² in the process of/

1. Human Nature and Conduct, p.176.

2. " " " " p. 186.

of biological adaptation to environment. The questions which such a dictum at once raises are whether knowing can be adequately interpreted in terms of anything not itself and whether there is any need for postulating a self which is active and in knowing.

Dewey's position in this regard manifestly arises from his avowed desire to base psychology on biology. He himself attributes all that is distinctive in his psychology to this attempt to interpret the facts of human life from the biological point of view.¹ When thus interpreted, he finds that "interaction of organism and environment, resulting in some adaptation which secures utilisation of the latter, is the primary fact, the basic category. Knowledge is relegated to a derived position, secondary in origin ... (and) involved in the process by which life is sustained and evolved. The senses lose their place as gateways of knowing to take their rightful place as stimuli to action".² The biological point of view, then, pervades his psychology and leads him to such conclusions as the foregoing, which we must now discuss.

If knowing is thus "secondary in origin," it would appear that it must be derived from something other than itself. Accordingly Dewey tells us that knowing is derived from "the workings of natural impulses in connection with environment."³

What/

What is meant by this seems to be that "we know at such times as (when) habits are impeded when a conflict is set up in which impulse is released,"¹ that is, that knowing arises as a sequence of impeded impulse in the process of biological adaptation to environment. While this may be true, it surely cannot be regarded as giving us the right to regard knowing as derived from impulse. All that it seems capable of vouching for seems to be that knowing follows impeded impulse, but to conclude from this that knowing is derived from impulse would seem to be to fall into the logical fallacy of post hoc ergo propter hoc. But beyond such an account of the secondariness of knowing, Dewey seems to give no other. Further, when it is seen that no amount of effort is able when impulse is altogether non-cognitive, to produce knowledge, it would seem that knowing cannot be regarded as derivable from impulse. Thus when impulse is regarded as wholly non-cognitive it would seem to be a mere unconscious urge, not unlike motion in a billiard ball, or movement in what psychologists are wont to call, reflex action, and how knowledge can be derived from it is not what one can easily see. But if impulse from which knowing is sought to be derived is itself regarded as including a cognitive element, or a certain amount of awareness, in it, - and this is possibly what Dewey assumes throughout his argument without being aware of it - then, it would seem very like a confession from him that knowing is not derived from/

from ~~him~~ anything not itself, but is an underived and ultimate aspect of consciousness, in as much as it is found to exist even in the most elementary psychological data that he is willing to recognise.

A similar conclusion would seem to follow if instead of starting with impulse, we start with sensations as our primary data. We noticed that Dewey regarded sensations as non-cognitive. If by this is meant that the function of sensations is essentially practical and biological, we may readily agree with him that this is indeed even as he tells us, but to go further and to assert that sensations "are not ways of knowing at all", that a sensation is "urgent not cognitive in quality", is to fail to see that while sensations perform a very important function in aiding biological adaptation to environment, they seem also to be "ways of knowing", however imperfect they may be in this capacity. To deny some kind of awareness as primitively included in sensation is surely to go against facts. Is it not true, for example, that in sensing red, I not only experience certain mental processes which suggest to me a certain response, but am also aware of red as a given object? How then are we to agree with Dewey in thinking that sensations are wholly non-cognitive? In fact, it would seem that if sensations did not include an element of awareness in them, they cannot even function as stimuli which bring about a response from the individual (if by response is meant, as it ~~should~~ should be meant/

1. Reconstruction in Phil. p.90.
2. " " p.87.

meant, conscious action), for ex hypotnesi they would be unconscious, and the action resulting from them so similar to the action and reaction of bodies in the realm of Physics, that they would hardly be capable of accounting for the conscious, responsive action that we find in the realm of biology and that Dewey regards them as bringing about. If so, it would appear that awareness must be regarded as forming an essential part of sensation, as we know it in man, and this is the same as saying that since the knowing aspect of consciousness is found once more to characterise even the most primitive psychological data that we are able to reach, it must be regarded as an underived and ultimate aspect of human consciousness.

The reason for Dewey's refusing to regard knowing as a primary aspect of human consciousness seems to be that he is so imbued with the biological point of view, according to which overt action is the basic category that he fails to do justice to the knowing aspect of human consciousness. This fact comes to even greater prominence when we pass on to consider his view with regard to immediate knowing. We have already seen how Dewey failed to see that in sensation there is an element of knowing. This failure seems to lead him to deny the capacity for immediate apprehension. Immediate knowing comes to be interpreted by him wholly in terms of "behaviour", and on this hypothesis objects are regarded as experienced in immediate apprehension as merely stimuli to needed changes in operation¹ or/

or as "signals to redirections of action"¹, and as therefore not really apprehended. There seems, indeed, to be much truth in Dewey's contention as will be seen from the fact that as a rule in pursuing a course of activity we hardly ever think of the nature of the objects which we may use, but only regard them in their capacity to meet our purposes. A chair, for example, may often be for us not much more than a "signal" for the sitting activity. We hardly, under ordinary circumstances, think of the wood out of which the chair is made. But while this is so, such a view of the matter seems inadequate in that in sense-perception there seems to be not only an apprehension of meaning for activity, but also an apprehension of fact. In perceiving a chair, although I may think only of its meaning as a thing to sit on, I seem also to apprehend the chair as a given object, however vague this apprehension may be. To regard the chair as it appears in immediate apprehension as apprehended as a mere "signal" or "symbol" is on this account essentially misleading, for the symbol-element in our perception of the chair is not, as we have seen, by any means the whole of that perception. Dewey, however, because of his biological predilections seems so engrossed in the symbol-element in perception that he overlooks the fact-element in it and in the end comes to deny it. The falsity of such a procedure seems to become even more flagrant when it is seen that often we immediately apprehend objects which have no relevant relation whatever to the activity we are pursuing, either in the way of furthering/

furthering or hindering it. Thus on taking a walk, I may see stones, people, houses, trees and birds, which under ordinary circumstances may not present themselves as symbols for action at all. They seem to present themselves for what they are quite independent of my purposes or behaviour, and therefore not as "signals to redirection of action". In their case the element of fact seems much more predominant in consciousness than the element of meaning. Dewey, however, completely overlooks ~~such~~ such immediate apprehension of objects, apprehension signifying for him, because of his "behaviourism," something wholly purposive and never contemplated^{ive}. But this, as we have been trying to show, seems quite unwarranted by the facts as brought to light in sense perception. Further such a view with regard to immediate apprehension is destructive of all knowledge, for if the knowledge that becomes possible for us in immediate apprehension, be denied, then it is evident that we can have nothing on which to construct the mediate knowledge of which Dewey speaks. The scepticism and subjectivism which as we shall see characterise Dewey's Logic and Ethics seem thus to be traceable to this one psychological doctrine of his which denies the capacity for immediate apprehension. Knowledge, whether of facts, or of values, becomes on this hypothesis impossible with the result that truth and goodness come to be interpreted in wholly subjective terms. But all this is in anticipation, it being necessary here only to note that Dewey because of his "biologism", denies the capacity for immediate apprehension, which, however, appears to be/

be an ultimate characteristic of the human consciousness, as ultimate indeed as "behaviour" itself into terms of which he seeks to reduce it.

The reason why Dewey does not wish to acknowledge knowing, and immediate knowing in particular, as an ultimate aspect of human consciousness seems to be not only because of his "biologism", to which we have referred above, but also because of his naturalism which is unable to explain except as below in terms of behaviour the analysis and synthesis which seems to characterise the knowing aspect of consciousness. He tells us, "it is ... almost a truism that knowledge is both synthetic and analytic, ... a set of discriminated elements connected by relations. This combination of opposite factors of unity and difference, elements and relations, has been a standing paradox and mystery of the theory of knowledge. It will remain so until we connect the theory of knowledge with an empirically verifiable theory of behaviour, ... We know at such times as habits are impeded, when a conflict is set up in which impulse is released. So far as this impulse sets up a definite forward tendency it constitutes the forward, prospective character of knowledge. In this phase unity or synthesis is found. We are striving to unify our responses to achieve a consistent environment which will restore unity of conduct. ... But what we know the objects that present themselves with definiteness and assurance are retrospective. ... They are elements discriminated, analytic just because old habits so far as they are checked are also broken into objects which define the obstruction of

of ongoing activity. ... Unity is something sought; split, division is something given, at hand.¹"

Although this may be an accurate description of the mental processes involved in striving to overcome a conflict which is perceived in the way of a successful pursuing of one's activity, it seems altogether to fail to touch the problem of analysis and synthesis in immediate apprehension, as we know it in Logic. The question is, whether all knowing, whether mediate^{or} immediate, does not involve complex processes of analysis and synthesis, and to seek to answer this question by comparing logical analysis with the "division" given in a situation of conflict, and logical synthesis with "unity sought" in the same situation seems^{while} quite capable of being interpreted to apply to mediate knowledge, not capable of being applied to immediate knowledge at all. It is perhaps understandable that Dewey's account of analysis and synthesis should apply only to mediate knowledge for on his hypothesis, as we saw, there was no such thing as immediate knowledge; but our objection is not that he does not deal with a problem which does not exist for him but that just because the problem does not exist for him, his account of the matter fails to touch the question which is so fundamental, namely, that even in apprehension of the most immediate kind, there are involved, as Kant has shown, processes of analysis and synthesis. The question is whether in perceiving anything, whether it be "given division" or "unity sought" there are not involved complex processes of analysis and synthesis./

synthesis. Dewey however does not face this question with the result, as we shall see, that he fails to give us an adequate account of the knowing self.

If knowing is thus characterised by processes of analysis = and synthesis throughout all its manifestations it would appear, as Kant pointed out, that nothing can adequately account for it, except a knowing self. Dewey, however, refuses to postulate a self which is active in knowing. For him the self is but "a system of beliefs, desires and purposes, which are formed in the interaction of biological aptitudes with a social environment"¹. He speaks of the self as but "the bearer or carrier of experience"². The chief objection that Dewey brings forward against the self as more than a mere "bearer of experience" is that such a view with regard to it "implies first the severance of man from nature and then of each man from his fellows"³. But it hardly seems possible to regard this as what those who believe in a self in this manner are logically committed to. On the other hand, it would seem that it must be regarded by all that a self, as we know it, cannot exist as a self apart from a physical and social environment. Dewey's arguments, therefore, against the idea of a "separate and independent consciousness", a "separate psychic realm", an "original individual consciousness",⁴ though quite legitimate, seem to be urged against a view which hardly anyone can be found to hold.

Dewey's/

1. Human Nature etc. preface.
2. " " " p.292.
3. " " " p.85.
4. " " " p.87.

Dewey's real reason for denying the self as an active principle expressing itself in all its mental life seems to be that on the naturalistic basis on which he seeks to build¹ his psychology there seems no necessity for, and perhaps no possibility of, postulating such a self. We have already seen how Dewey failed to see the processes of analysis and synthesis which seem to be involved in immediate apprehension, and in line with this he holds that "habits do all the perceiving recognising, imagining,¹ recalling, judging, conceiving and reasoning that is done", and since "habits" seem to mean for Dewey dispositions formed by the constant working on us of the physical and "social context", habits seem to work mechanically on the appearance of the appropriate stimulus without the need of a self.² This seems indeed to find support in the biological realm, to which, as we have seen, Dewey likes to go for his views on psychology. In the biological realm, it would seem that there is evidence for what Scholastic philosophers were wont to call "sensuous memory", a good illustration of which we may borrow from Stout. "A dog which has been whipped will whine and display signs of fear and distress at the sight of the lash.³ The original pain-sensations produced a diffuse nervous excitement, which gave rise to a general disturbance of organic functions and to organic sensations. The sight of the whip revives an analagous nervous and bodily excitement and with it analagous experiences." Whether the dog can rightly/

1. Human Nature etc. p.177.

2. " " p.138.

3. Stout, G.F., Manual of Psychology, 3rd Ed. p.385.

rightly be said to remember being whipped or not, the mere sight of the whip seems to be sufficient to stir up experiences similar to the one with which the lash was originally connected. In such a case perhaps we may agree with Dewey that "knowledge ... ¹ lives in the muscles, not in consciousness" - at least so it seems to all outward appearances. But to seek to reduce all knowledge to terms of such more or less mechanical response proceeding from the ~~museel~~ muscles to frequently occurring stimuli seems, while consistent enough with Dewey's professed naturalism and "biologism", to do great injustice to the mental activity which seems obviously to be involved in the higher forms of knowledge. Thus in recognition, for example, which forms an essential aspect of the knowing activity, we seem to have more than a mere reproduction of mental states; there being in addition to the experiencing of mental states, similar to previous ones - which is all that we found to be given in the case of the dog when it "recognises" the whip - an identification of this similarity. The circumstances that a nerve-current passing through a system of nerve-fibres may leave there physiological "vestiges" which make it easier for a similar nerve current occurring later to traverse the same path, seems in no way to indicate how this second nerve-current or its accompanying mental state is to recognise itself as resembling the first. If the dog of Stout's Illustration showed signs of fear and distress at the sight of the lash as such, with no recognition of the lash as what was the cause of painful experiences/

periences in the past, then we cannot, it would seem credit the dog with memory - if by this is meant not retentiveness in general but the capacity to recall ideally past experiences and to identify them as such. Whether the lower animals can be credited with such memory or not, it seems certain that the two kinds of memory are quite distinct; for while one is, if we may so put it, wholly unconscious, the other is conscious of itself. It is the confusion ^{of} ~~with~~ the former with the latter, owing to naturalistic and biological predilections, that seems to underlie Dewey's assertion that "knowledge ... lives in the muscles not in consciousness", and prevents him from seeing the necessity of the self as an active principle in all human experience. Further when it is noted that the simplest act of judgment and the briefest process of reasoning would seem to be impossible if an abiding self, as distinguished from its changing states, were not capable of passing from subject to predicate and from premise to conclusion, and of viewing them as mutually related to each other, still more would the complicated processes of reasoning which seem to characterise the higher forms of knowledge appear to be impossible apart from a self, which is not merely a "bearer or carrier of experience" or a mere sum of its mental states systematised and viewed as a whole, but an active principle which works in and through the manifold diversity which characterises its life.

How this failure to regard the self as an active principle underlying all its activities affects his ethical theory will appear later. Here it is only necessary to state that it would seem to prevent Dewey from seeing the complexity which characterises/

ises man's conscious life, and accordingly unduly to simplify the processes which seem to be involved in the moral life. How Dewey comes to view the self in this manner is clear. His naturalistic biological psychology, as we saw, prevented him from seeing the complex active processes that seem to be involved in all knowing, whether mediate or immediate, and this quite consistently enough leads him to deny the self as an active principle and to regard it as a mere "bearer of experience."

2. Moral Consciousness.

Till now we have been concerned only with knowledge in general; but this, as Dewey tells us, "is of far-reaching importance for everything concerned with moral beliefs, conscience and judgments of right and wrong."¹ Just as knowing is for Dewey a product of habit and impulse, so it would seem is the moral attitude. Thus he tells us "if it is recognised that knowing is carried on through the medium of natural factors, the assumption of special agencies for moral knowing becomes outlawed and incredible". Moral knowing, like knowing in general, becomes an "acquirement", a "²bi-product". Having been hit upon accidentally, as it were, and the product being liked and its importance noted, it becomes upon occasion, a definite occupation, "and education confirms the disposition, as it may confirm that of a musician or carpenter or tennis player. But there is no more an original separate/

1. Human Nature etc. p.184.
2. " " p.185.

separate impulse or power in one case than in the other".

Since Dewey's view here regarding the derivedness of moral knowing is, as he himself tells us, but a corollary from his view regarding the derivedness of knowing in general, it would seem to labour under the difficulties pointed out in connection with that view.

This failure to take account of the moral attitude as an ultimate characteristic of the human consciousness comes to pervert his view of conscience or moral knowing. Conscience or moral knowing comes therefore to be viewed by him as concerned, in the end, with discovering what acts tend to produce the most agreeable consequences, as these are determined for us by our social environment.² In defining conscience, he says, "When a child acts, those about him react. They shower encouragement upon him, visit him with approval, or they bestow frowns and rebukes. What others do to us when we act is as natural a consequence of our action as what the fire does to us when we plunge our hands in it... In language and imagination we rehearse the responses of others just as we dramatically enact other consequences."³ And in discussing moral ends, he tells us, "They (moral ends) arise out of natural effects or consequences which in the beginning are hit upon, stumbled upon so far as any purpose is concerned. Men like some of the consequences and dislike others. Henceforth (or, till attraction and repulsion alter) attaining or averting/

1. Human Nature etc. p.186.
2. cp. " " pp. 225f., p.206, and pp.314-15.
3. " " pp.314&15.

averting similar consequences are aims or ends. These consequences constitute the meaning and value of an activity as it comes under deliberation."¹ Moral judgments, then, would on this hypothesis imply a certain amount of experience, and observation of the effects of our acts, especially their effects upon others and a classification of these acts according as they produced agreeable or disagreeable consequences. Even admitting all this with the proviso that much of this work, if it occurs, must be regarded as taking place unconsciously, it would seem that such a view with regard to the psychological antecedents of moral judgment fails in one important particular. It fails to distinguish between a judgment which asserts that an act has agreeable consequences and a judgment which asserts that an act has moral value. That these two judgments are psychologically distinct there can, it would seem, be little doubt. When I judge for instance that an act such as the partaking of a sumptuous meal has agreeable consequences, I need not at all be thinking of the act as morally good or bad. On the other hand, it would seem that in order to decide whether the partaking of such a meal is morally good or bad, I must approach the question from an entirely different point of view and ask, whether in spite of being agreeable, the partaking of a sumptuous meal is morally right at a time, let us say, when many of my neighbours are dying of starvation. The two judgments therefore appear to be psychologically distinct, the moral judgment being/

1. Human Nature etc. p.225.

being conditioned by the moral point of view, while the judgment regarding what it is that will produce agreeable consequences is not so conditioned. The ultimate moral attitude, which seems thus to come to the foreground as what in the end distinguishes moral judgments from judgments regarding what produces the most agreeable consequences, would seem then to be what is most characteristic of moral knowing. And yet Dewey's view which seems to regard moral knowing as concerned with discovering what produces the most agreeable consequences, appears to be based on a failure to note this fundamental fact- this failure being no doubt, in the last analysis, due to the reason that on the non-moral biological level to which Dewey likes to go for his interpretation of moral phenomena, the ultimate moral attitude which we have found to underlie moral knowing is not vouched for.

Dewey's failure to take account of the ultimate moral attitude appears to come to even greater prominence in his account of moral obligation. This is after all the touchstone by which all psychological theories of the moral consciousness would seem to be required to be tested, for as Kant has shown, the sense of ought seems to be what is most characteristic of that consciousness. Dewey regards the sense of moral obligation as "the work wrought¹ in us by the social environment." In discussing the authority of Right, he says, "we live in a world where others live too. Our acts affect them. They perceive these effects, and react upon us in consequence. Because they are living beings they make demands upon/

1. Human Nature etc., p.316.

upon us for certain things from us. They approve and condemn- not in abstract theory but in what they do to us. The answer to the question 'Why not put your hand in the fire?' is the answer of fact. If you do, your hand will be burnt. The answer to the question why acknowledge the right is of the same sort. For Right is only an abstract name for the multitude of concrete demands in action which others impress upon us, and of which we are obliged, if we would live, to take some account. Its authority is the exigency of their demands, the efficacy of their insistencies."² "(The right) signifies the totality of social pressures exercised upon us to induce us to think and desire in certain ways."² Moral obligation, then, comes to be identified, on Dewey's theory, with the sense of being under social compulsion. Whether the two attitudes can be thus identified is what we must consider. If they can be identified, it would seem, that Dewey is right in not taking account of the moral attitude; for when they are thus identified, it would appear that the moral attitude, which seems so inextricably bound up with the sense of moral obligation, is but an indirect expression of the desire to secure agreeable consequences on the part of one living under social compulsion, and therefore not an ultimate and underived characteristic of the moral consciousness as we have taken it to be. The question therefore whether the sense of moral obligation can be identified with the sense of social compulsion would seem to be of prime importance for our discussion/

1. Human Nature etc. p. 326.
 2. " " p. 327.

discussion.

That historically the two attitudes- viz., that produced by the sense of moral obligation and that produced by the sense of ~~moral~~ social compulsion- have been found intimately associated with each other, there ~~are~~ can be no doubt, that in certain stages of morality what was socially required was identical in content with what was felt to ^{be} morally obligatory seems to be fairly well established, but that therefore the attitude which is produced by the sense of moral obligation is identical with the attitude which is produced by the sense of social compulsion, does not seem to follow. The one, on the other hand, seems to be quite distinct from the other, as is easily ^{seen} from the fact that the two attitudes may and often do come into violent conflict with each other, as seems fully borne witness to in the experience of individuals and races that have reached what has been called the reflective stage in morality. That principles which thus oppose each other cannot rightly be equated with each other would seem to be an elementary truth.

That the attitude produced by the sense of moral obligation is distinct from that produced by the sense of social compulsion is further confirmed by the fact of moral progress, for moral progress would seem to be impossible so long as the two coincided. Moral progress seems to demand as its fundamental requisite that moral obligation should attach itself to more than what is required by society, but on Dewey's hypothesis it would appear that moral obligation cannot do anything of the kind, for ex hypothesi moral obligation is regarded as identical with social compulsion. Dewey's/

Dewey's theory, then, in so far as it identifies moral obligation with social compulsion would be seen to be contradicted by the fact of moral progress.

Further, that the two attitudes are psychologically quite distinct is seen by analysing the two attitudes themselves. Without attempting to be exhaustive in our analysis, it would appear that the sense of moral obligation is constituted by a consciousness of moral good on the one side, and a consciousness that this good is binding on the self, on the other, the coercion perceived being that of the moral good itself, while the sense of social compulsion would seem to be constituted by a consciousness of what is required by society and a consciousness of this as binding on the self, the coercion here being perceived not as that of the moral good, but as that of the society which demands the particular act. In the case of the sense of moral obligation, then, it would seem that there need be no consciousness at all of social compulsion, and in the case of the sense of social compulsion that there need be no consciousness at all of moral good. A sharper distinction can hardly be desired.

In accordance with what in each case is regarded as authoritative, there appears a further distinction. The authority of the good is felt to be not only imposed by one's own best judgment, but as absolutely binding, while the authority of social compulsion (apart from the sense of the moral good) is felt to be external and foreign to oneself, and therefore as really not binding. The first/

attitude seems to be the attitude of the man who is able to say that the service of the Good is perfect freedom, while the second seems to be the attitude of the slave who feels himself bound to serve a tyrant from whom he is unable to flee. So great appears to be the difference in attitude according to what is in each case regarded as authoritative that it hardly seems possible to regard the man who does the Good, merely because he is required by society, as at all moral, much less to reduce the one attitude to terms of the other.

Not only do the two attitudes seem to be quite distinct when viewed psychologically, but it seems that we are unable as a matter of fact to derive moral obligation from social compulsion as the theory demands. This is only to be expected, for if the two attitudes are psychologically distinct, no amount of manipulating the one can, it would seem, reduce it to the other. If a person can be found who had no sense of moral obligation, it would seem that while social compulsion can force him to do certain things which are good, it can never get him to feel that he ought to do those things. He will feel that he must do them, if he is to escape punishment or attain reward, but not, it would seem, that he ought to do them. To pass from the ~~must~~ to the ought would seem to require that he should regard what he must do, not only as what he is compelled to do by society, but also as itself morally good. Without this moral attitude, then, it would appear that there/

there is no way of his regarding what society enjoins as morally obligatory. The same point may also be expressed by saying that though obligation may be brought home to one by force, force cannot create obligation. Such theories as Dewey's which seek to drive moral obligation from social compulsion seem really to take for granted throughout their argument the fact of obligation, and only to show the historical process by which its fuller recognition is brought about; but this is surely an illegitimate procedure on their hypothesis, for it is to take for granted the very thing they are trying to deny. If, however, it were not taken for granted, it would seem from the fact that no amount of social compulsion is, as we have seen, able to create moral obligation, that Dewey's theory cannot account for moral obligation at all. We may therefore confront Dewey with a dilemma^m, either to accept moral obligation as an ultimate and underived characteristic of the moral consciousness, in which case he must renounce his naturalism, and accept the moral attitude as an ultimate aspect of the moral consciousness, or to deny the fact of moral obligation in which case he will be denying what is most characteristic of that consciousness.

The inability to do justice to what is most characteristic of the moral consciousness, namely, the sense of moral obligation, seems to be, as we noted, but the result of his failure (to which we have repeatedly referred) to note the ultimate moral attitude which/

which seems to distinguish that consciousness and with which the sense of moral obligation seems so inextricably bound up. This failure to note the ultimate moral attitude coupled with his denial of the capacity for immediate apprehension, and rejection of the self as an active principle underlying all experience, all of which we have found to be involved in his view with regard to knowing in general, we shall find in the end to be responsible for much of his view in Ethics.

In the meantime, we may conclude by pointing out that the chief defect in Dewey's psychology seems to arise from the naturalistic, biological setting into which Dewey likes to fit the facts of human consciousness. While the biological approach to the study of human nature may in itself be praiseworthy it seems to lead us astray when it is regarded as providing the framework into which all of the facts of human consciousness must fit. On this hypothesis, as Dewey himself tells us, ^{1.} interaction of organism and environment, resulting in adaptation becomes the primary fact, the basic category. Knowing is relegated to a derived position, secondary in origin, immediate apprehension is denied altogether to be a way of knowing, with disastrous consequences as we shall see for his Logic and Ethics, the activity of the mind which is implied in all knowing is overlooked, with the result that the self comes to be denied, or if affirmed, to be regarded as a mere system of beliefs and purposes. In line/

line with all this, the ultimate moral attitude which seems to be presupposed in moral knowing is overlooked, and the capacity for immediate apprehension - more especially capacity for immediate apprehension of moral value as we shall see later - is denied and what is left would seem to be so wholly on the non-moral biological level, that it must not surprise us if Dewey's naturalism and "Biologism" combined to prevent him from giving us an adequate system of Ethics.

SECTION II.

L O G I C.

In our preface, we stated that Dewey's biological psychology led him to a nominalistic logic,¹ which may be found to determine his views in ethics. The nominalism which thus seems to pervade his Ethics will, of course, not come to our notice till we reach our ethical section. All that we propose to do here is merely to discuss the bases of this nominalism as we gather them from a critical study of his logical theory of universals or concepts, for it would seem that once Dewey's nominalism in its logical form is questioned, such of his views in Ethics as are based on this nominalism will in so far be questionable.

A few words will be added, at the end of this section, on Dewey's view of Truth or Logical Validity, for according to him, his view regarding moral validity gains support, to say the least, from his view regarding logical validity.²

1. Universals or Concepts.

We may point out, to start with, the biological setting in which Dewey's theory of concepts appears. Thus he tells us that/

1. We have hazarded the statement that Dewey's nominalism is the result of his biological psychology. The truth of this statement will appear in the course of this section.
2. cp. Reconstruction in philosophy p. 172. "Experimental logic when carried into morals makes every quality that is judged to be good according as it contributes to amelioration of existing ills".

that "thought or intelligence is the means of intentional reconstruction of experience"¹. He never tires of asserting that thinking is never otiose, but always arises in a situation of conflict, and has a special function to perform, namely, to contrive means of getting over the conflict². "Knowing", on this view "ceases to be contemplative and becomes practical",³ "the interaction of organism and environment, resulting in some adaptation which secures utilisation of the latter, is the primary fact, the basic category"⁴. It is necessary to note this biological setting for, as we shall see, it lays bare the fundamental assumptions on which Dewey's theory of Concepts is based.

Chief among the doctrines to which such a biological point of view in Psychology leads him, we noticed, was one that declared that immediate apprehension yields no knowledge but only "stimuli to behaviour". Once this is granted, it will seem that Dewey's view regarding concepts will follow as a matter of course, for on this view, as we shall see, Concepts are not true of the real world, but are only a set of devices which will aid one in behaviour, i.e. in adaptation to environment. It is easily seen how this follows necessarily from the denial of immediate apprehension as yielding knowledge, for if immediate apprehension does not yield knowledge, and since for Dewey Concepts are not the revelations of some "super-empirical reason",⁵ but are the products of experience,

1. Reconstruction in Philosophy p. 134.
 2. Essays in Experimental Logic pp. 9-12
 3. Reconstruction in Philosophy p. 116
 4. " " " p. 87
 5. " " " p. 90

it would seem that concepts must in the end be generalisations from immediate apprehension; but since immediate apprehension is assumed to give no knowledge of the real, what is a generalisation from immediate apprehension cannot, it would seem, reveal anything constitutive of the real world. The biological point of view, then, which as we saw in our psychological section, completely overlooked the fact of immediate knowledge, and in the end denied it, seems to be what contributes to Dewey's theory of Concepts.

In a similar manner, again because of certain biological assumptions which will presently disclose themselves, Dewey finds that Concepts are not fixed forms nor classes, but are only artificial lines of division invented by us, as being convenient for our purposes at the moment, and giving place to others when other purposes arise. Thus, he tells us, "a basis is furnished for selecting and organising things according as their ways of acting are related to carry ^{ing} forward pursuit. Cherry trees will be differently grouped by wood-workers, orchardists, artists, scientist, and merry-makers. To the execution of different purposes, different ways of acting and reacting on the part of trees are important. Each classification may be equally sound when the difference of ends is borne in mind"¹. "Things have to be sorted out and arranged so that their grouping will promote successful action for ends. Convenience, economy and efficiency are the bases of classification."²

The/

1. Reconstruction in Philosophy p. 153.
2. " " " p. 154

The rôle which Dewey thus comes to ascribe to purpose in the formation of Concepts seems to be one of the chief outcomes of his "behaviourism". He emphasises²⁰ the teleological character of classifications. He tells us that things are classed together in spite of their endless diversity "in view of common relationship to an end"¹. He would have us believe that purpose is in the end what ^{is} ~~was~~ responsible for Concepts. While much of this may undoubtedly be true, the only point of controversy is whether purpose can be regarded as so wholly creative of concepts that it can be regarded as the ultimate test of concepts. On this point Dewey expresses himself without ambiguity. He speaks of the "objective standard" by which classifications are to be tested as indeed the purpose for which they are made,¹ and apparently recognises no other objective criterion by which they are to be tested than the need for sorting out and grouping things so that they will promote successful action for ends.²

In criticism we may point out that however true it may be that, as Dewey tells us, "one (classification) will further the cabinetmaker in reaching his end while another will hamper him. One classification will assist the botanist in carrying^{on} fruitfully his work of enquiry, and another will retard and confuse him",³ it seems certain that if the classifications of the cabinetmaker and the botanist were not based on universal characteristics existing/

1. Reconstruction in Philosophy p. 153.
2. " " " p. 154
3. " " " pp. 153-4

existing in the objects that they dealt with, then not all the purposes in the world can create these universal characteristics in the respective objects. For this reason, it would appear, that our purposes can be rightly regarded as determining only our apprehension of the common elements in things but that unless these common elements existed in things, they could never be found - much less ^{be} made use of for our purposes. But to admit what seems such a common place matter will seem to involve some serious changes in Dewey's theory. It will prevent him from regarding purpose as providing the objective criterion of Concepts, for now it will seem that the objective test of a Concept is not the wholly subjective one afforded by purpose or need, but the outer world of things and persons. It appears, then, that Dewey's view with regard to concepts is brought about by his "biologism" which has so exaggerated the rôle of purpose in relation to Concepts that purpose for action comes to be regarded as the objective test of Concepts.

Another determining factor with regard to concepts would seem to be, according ^{to} ~~the~~ Dewey, the principle of economy or convenience. Thus, as we saw, Dewey tells us that "convenience, economy and efficiency are the bases of classification". In this view once again his desire to interpret the facts of mental life in biological terms of utility to action seems to come to the surface. But even considered apart from such a desire, Dewey's view here seems to be forced upon him from the fact that, holding as/

as he does that "Every concrete experience in its totality is unique, ... is itself non-reduplicable"¹, there seems no other way of explaining how language with its meanings has come to be at all. If things have nothing in common, then a Concept cannot, it would seem, be more than a name for calling up all the unique particulars for which it stands; but if asked how do such names come to exist at all if they stood for nothing real, the only available answer seems to be that it was convenient to group things in classes under common names, even though these things were severally unique. It was economical, it saved fatigue, in short, it was biologically useful.² That put thus, the view seems very plausible there can be no doubt; but its plausibility seems to be gained altogether by identifying the concept with the word - ^aview which we will examine later. Meanwhile, regarding the principle of Thought-economy, on which Dewey depends so largely for support, the principle itself even if valid, cannot it would seem prove anything, for it seems to be capable of being interpreted as favourable to Dewey's view of universals as well as to a view which holds that universals exist in particulars. Just as concepts are invented on Dewey's view, for the sake of economising effort, so it may be held that words are invented for the sake of economising effort in identifying the universal elements in the particular items of experience. Thus it would seem that the principle ^{of} Thought-economy can be pressed into the service of almost any view we wish. Further, the criticisms which we/

we have urged against regarding purpose as the objective test of concepts will seem to apply equally here, for it is evident that while the need for economy may lead us to look for similarities in things by which we may classify them, it cannot create these similarities. Here again it appears that Dewey has got hold of a truth and exaggerated it till it has become a falsehood.

In line with the idea that concepts exist for the sake of economy is the idea that they are inventions,¹ products of art.¹ Without going into the question yet of whether concepts can be regarded as inventions, we may enquire how far all concepts can be regarded as a work of art, and whether this makes them any the less real. Thus we are told "not all qualities are equally fitted to be meanings of a wide efficiency, and it is ^awork of art to select the proper qualities for doing the work. This corresponds to the working over of raw material into an effective tool. ... the more delicate and complicated ^{the} work which it has to do, the more art intervenes".² That the means whereby we come to perceive the universal elements in things may be very elaborate is fairly well borne witness to by the complicated contrivances which science adopts for this purpose; but that all cases of grasping the universal pre-suppose such conscious art seems questionable. Some concepts such as that of substance, identity and difference, eg., seem to be so simple and ultimate that it led some philosophers to regard such ultimate concepts as innate/

1. Reconstruction in Phil. p. 149
2. Essays in Experimental Logic p. 55.

innate and given prior to ^{all} ~~our~~ experience. Without going to this length, it seems quite possible to hold that some concepts like the ones mentioned above are so simple that the mind seems to have ^{the} ~~a~~ capacity of apprehending them immediately on presentation in the items of experience. To grasp such universals, it does not seem necessary to see and compare several members of the same class; ^{the} on other hand, by such processes, it would appear that these concepts can never be arrived at, for things cannot be seen and compared unless they were already perceived to be things that were different and yet similar, but to perceive them so is already, it would seem, to employ these universals which it is sought to gain by complicated processes of observation and comparison. It is facts such as these that seem inconvenient to Dewey's naturalistic psychology, but nothing is gained it would appear by overlooking them.

We have next to enquire whether if ~~our~~ arriving at concepts implies much art, they ^{are} ~~on~~ on that account any the less objective, i.e. whether the more abstract the concept the less true it is of the real world. This leads us to consider what is accomplished in abstraction which Dewey considers to be the process by which concepts are reached. We are told that abstraction means that some phase of a concrete experience is ~~sab~~ected for the sake of the aid it gives in grasping something else,¹ but that this abstracted element taken by itself is "a mangled fragment, a poor substitute for the living whole from which it is extracted",¹ and that "the more theoretical, the more abstract an abstraction, or the further away it is from anything/

anything experienced in its concreteness, the better fitted to it is to deal with anyone of the indefinite variety of things that may later present themselves".¹ Though it cannot be doubted that in abstract^{-ion}, as the very word implies, some el^ement of the concrete detail of actual sense perception is removed from its setting, it does not at all seem to follow from this that what is thus removed becomes on that account a "mutilated fragment". That it is a fragment would seem to follow from the nature of abstraction, but that this fragment is mutilated would ~~mean~~ need independent proof; but this Dewey does not give. He seems merely to assume that abstraction mutilates the real.

When however it is seen that the facts do not warrant such a view, it would appear that we must regard Dewey's view in this connection as unacceptable. Redness for example may be a quality belonging to an apple, and in actual sense-perception it may be combined with several other qualities like largeness, roundness, softness, sweetness, etc., but at any one time the quality of redness may hold my attention, and I may consciously abstract this quality from all the other qualities of the apple, and view it as capable of belonging to a definite number of objects. In this process, though being thus abstracted from all the other qualities of the apple, the quality of redness may rightly be viewed as but a fragment of what was given in the original sense perception, it would appear that redness though thus abstracted remains redness - a quality of the apple and of all other red objects. How it becomes mutilated is not what/

what one can see. It is possible that the view of the abstracted quality as mutilated bases itself on the fact that while I think of the abstract quality of redness, I may imagine a shade of red which is different from that which I perceived in the apple. But this surely is to confound the image ^{by means of which} I think the universal, redness, with the universal itself which is apprehended through the image. The image of redness may be mutilated in the sense that the image of redness which I may employ at ^a ~~the~~ particular time may be the image of a redness different in shade from what I perceived in the apple; but the universal, redness, which I apprehended in this manner seems unaffected by the image which I employ in its apprehension for this appears as the quality that is possessed in common by all objects that are red, and therefore as a real and not a mutilated element of the apple and of all the other objects in which it inher^es. It is this confusion between image and the universal which is apprehended through it that seems to lead to the view that the concept is but a mutilated fragment of the real. However, this is merely speculation on our part for Dewey nowhere attempts to prove that abstraction mutilates the real - a point which he merely seems to assume.

Such a view with regard to abstraction necessarily leads to the view that concepts, many of which are formed by processes of abstraction, are inventions; or as Dewey is fond of calling them, "tools", for if they are mutilated and distorted, there seems no way of accounting for them, but to regard/

regard them as "works of art, constructed for a purpose in doing the things which have to be done" ¹ Thus Dewey tells us, "a classification is not a bare transcript or duplicate of some finished and done-for arrangement, pre-existing in nature. It is rather a repertory of weapons for attack upon the future and the unknown. For success, the details of past knowledge must be reduced from bare facts to meanings, the fewer, simpler and more extensive the better. ... They must be arranged as not to overlap... In order that there may be ease and economy of movement in dealing with the enormous diversity of occurrences that present themselves, we must be able to move promptly and definitely from one tool of ^{to another} attack" ² "to accomplish this effectively, to develop an order then, till they become economic tools (and tools upon tools) for making an unknown and uncertain situation into a known and certain one, is the recorded triumph of human intelligence" ¹ While in this account of the function of conception there is much truth, Dewey has, it would seem, in regarding concepts as tools, fallen into the very error which he constantly repudiates, namely, of hypostatizing meanings into essences or subsistences having some sort of mysterious being apart from qualitative things and changes. ³ When concepts are regarded as tools invented by us they seem to become entities which exist neither in the outer world nor in the mind, but in some ^{not} of a world midway between the two. That they cannot be regarded/

1. Essays in Experimental Logic p. 57
2. Reconstruction in Phil. pp. 154-5
3. Essays in Experimental Logic pp. 46-7

regarded as constitutive of the outer world, is shown by the fact that they are regarded as but mutilated fragments of this world; that they do not exist in the mind is shown by the fact that they are "tools", "instruments", which the mind makes use of in dealing with new problems. Where and how they exist becomes, then, an insoluble problem. The view as a matter of fact seems to rest on a failure to distinguish between an analogical way of speaking and an actual description of facts. Concepts may rightly be compared to tools, for it is by means of them that we seem to be enabled to construct great ^{systems} distance of knowledge, and to plan complicated plans of action; but to forget that when we speak of concepts as in this sense tools, we are speaking metaphorically seems to be to commit the elementary blunder of allowing ourselves to be misled by a metaphor, and one wonders if Dewey is not guilty of this very blunder when he speaks of concepts as "intellectual tools" and seeks to interpret them wholly as tools.¹ That concepts cannot be literally interpreted as tools, then, is seen from the simple fact that as we have been trying to show, concepts are not entities or things as tools are; nor is such a view of them consistent with Dewey's own legitimate protest against regarding concepts as things apart from the particulars of experience.

Further, to regard concepts as tools seems completely to overlook the logical significance or objective reference which is so characteristic of concepts. Just as in the case of sense-perception/

1. cp. Reconstruction on Phil. pp. 149 to 155, also Essays in Experimental Logic pp. 55-57

perception, we found that Dewey, because of his biological assumption^s, was so taken up with the apprehension in sense-perception of meaning for activity that he completely overlooked the apprehension of fact - the apprehension, in other words, in however ~~vague~~ ^a manner that the meaningful object exists, and exists ^{independent} ~~in the sense~~ of the agents' needs and purposes, -so here Dewey seems to be so taken up with the meaning of concepts for activity that he is led to overlook their objective reference, i.e. their reference to the common elements in things of which they are ^{the thought} ~~a~~ ^{part}. That this is illegitimate is seen from the fact that the chief thing about the concept seems to be its objective reference, its meaning for activity depending wholly on whether this claim to refer to the real world is justified. When I think of white, for example, I do not seem to be thinking of mental images, nor of symbols, nor of "substitutes"¹ for real objects, but of the white which seems to me to characterise some objects in the real world. This reference of the concept to something existing in the real world may be valid or not valid, but that there is this objective reference as ultimately included in the concept can, it would seem, be hardly denied. Dewey's theory, however, ^{which} ~~in~~ line with its "behaviourism", comes to regard concepts as tools which "fit" the real world, seems to be built on a neglect of this fundamental fact.

The attempt to interpret concepts as tools involves Dewey further in the nominalistic fallacy² of identifying the concepts³ with the world. Dewey himself seems never very accurate in/

in the use of his terminology. But it seems certain that on his theory there is hardly any distinction between concepts and words, for as we have seen according to him things are severally unique and particular, and concepts are tools whereby ~~they~~ ~~we~~ conveniently mark things off for our purposes. Concepts, then, become on this hypothesis no more than names under which for the moment we group several unique particulars. If so, it becomes difficult to see how they are distinguishable from words, for these also are rightly to be viewed as names which we invent for the sake of identifying certain particulars. As against such a view which identifies the concept with the word or the name, it is only necessary to point out that the history of scientific terminology seems directly to testify against it, for terms in science appear to be coined after the discovery of concepts and in order to symbolise them. Further, it may be pointed out that a view which identifies the concept with the word or name will lead us into the most absurd consequences, for the concept "white" e.g. would in that case be a name for lily, chalk, milk, paper, cloth, snow, etc. But to regard the concept, white, as a name for all these things is surely to do violence to language and to common thought, for it will be agreed by all, except those who are sworn to a theory which is unable to account for the phenomenon, that the concept, white, is not the name for a number of unique things which have somehow come to be grouped together, but that it refers to a property which all these various things have in common. Dewey himself, it/

it seems certain, cannot deny this; on the other hand, he himself seems to assume that our classifications have an objective basis throughout the argument which he uses to disprove the theory that concepts are objective- a rather paradoxical procedure. Thus in expounding his view regarding concepts, he tells us, "Concrete things have ways of acting, as many ways of acting as they have points of interaction with other things.... Now different ways of behaving, in spite of their endless diversity, may be classed together in view of common relationship to an end. ...a basis is furnished for selecting and organising things according as their ways of acting are related to carrying forward pursuit... To the execution of different purposes different ways of acting on the part of trees are important." (underlining mine) These statements surely give up the case, for they sufficiently admit that the particulars which are thus grouped together for purposes of "carrying forward pursuit" have all of them "ways of behaving", which however diverse otherwise, have at least this in common, that they are all alike in regard to their behaviour towards reaching a certain end. Once this much is admitted- and we have seen that Dewey himself admits it- then it would appear that Dewey's view that concepts are tools which "bunch" together various unique particulars must be discarded, for concepts appear to be not labour-saving devices invented by us, but forms of thought derived ^{from} the common features of the real world. We may therefore confront Dewey/

1. Reconstruction in Philosophy, p. 153.
2. " " " p. 152.

Dewey with a dilemma either to be consistent with his view that there is no similarity between two things in the real world, in which case concepts will have to be regarded as tools, in the end the same as words, or to admit that things are similar, or have threads of identity running through them, in which case it would seem, that he will have to renounce his nominalism.

Throughout our discussion, we have gone on the hypothesis that concepts are for Dewey not objective in the sense that they do not refer to elements in the real world. But Dewey definitely defends himself against the charge of subjectivism and claims that his theory does preserve the objectivity of concepts. We must examine his statements in this regard. He tells^{us} that "there is a genuine objective standard for the goodness of special classifications. One will further the cabinetmaker in reaching his end while another will hamper him. One classification will assist the botanist in carrying on fruitfully his work of inquiry, and another will retard and confuse him. The teleological theory of classification does not therefore commit^{us} to the notion that classes are purely verbal or purely mental. Organisation is no more merely nominal or mental in any art, including the art of inquiry, than it is in a department store or railway system. The necessity of execution supplies objective criteria." "they (classifications) concern objective action. They must take effect in the world." While all this may be true, it seems that if Dewey means- as he evidently does- by his statements in this regard to answer those who accuse him of making concepts/

concepts subjective ~~subjective~~, he has made use of the ambiguity of the word, objective, to slur over the problem with which they encounter him. What Dewey means when he speaks of concepts as objective seems to be that they, like tools, symbols and fictions, actually exist and exist for a very real purpose. In this sense, symbols and the most absurd fables are objective. But what is meant by those who accuse Dewey's theory of subjectivism seems to be that concepts are for Dewey not any more objective than symbols and fictions, ^{i.e.} that they do not refer for him to actual elements in the real world, which are there for us to discover, but are, like symbols and fictions, merely devices invented by us as suitable for our purposes. To prove that concepts are objective in the sense that symbols and fictions are objective, then, is surely not the same as proving that concepts are objective in the sense that they refer to, and are derived from, elements constitutive of the real world..

Not only does the theory of concepts to which Dewey's "behaviourist" psychology leads, seem to involve him thus in subjectivism, but it seems to plunge him in wholesale scepticism, as is shown by the following passage which deliberately makes conceptual knowing a case of adaptation, not a case of knowing. "There is no problem", Dewey tells us, "of how and why the plough fits, or applies to, the garden, or the watchspring to time-keeping. They were made for those respective purposes; the question is how well they do their work, and how they can be shaped to do it better... We do not measure the worth or reality of the tool by its closeness to its natural prototype/

type, but by its efficiency in doing its work- which connotes a great deal of intervening art. The theory proposed for mathematical distinctions and relations is precisely analogous. They are not the creations of mind except in the sense in which a telephone is a creation of mind... Both alike are works of art, constructed¹ for a purpose in doing the things which have to be done."

Concepts then would on this hypothesis appear to be related to the real world only in the sense that a plough is related to the garden. If so, it would seem, that while a concept can aid us in adapting ourselves to our environment, it can never claim to give us a ~~new~~ knowledge of the real world. Conceptual knowledge would therefore be knowledge only in name, a more appropriate name for it will be conceptual adaptation. The concept of Conservation of Energy which is so ^{much} employed in the realm of Physical Science will be a device by which we adapt ourselves to certain physical phenomena, but will not be really true of the real world. The concepts of Mathematics again will be similar devices, not really characteristic of anything in the real world and differing from the real world in very much the same way as a plough differs from a garden.

The scepticism which such a position, which comes to deny all knowledge and to cut at the roots of Science, involves, appears to be strangely inconsistent in the hands of Dewey who seems generally to be imbued with the greatest respect for, and confidence in, Science./

1. Essays in Experimental Logic, pp. 56&7.

Science. But starting as he does with the psychological assumptions which arise from his desire to interpret cognition on a purely biological level it appears that he can do no other. On this hypothesis, we noticed, ^{immediate} apprehension was not regarded as giving us a knowledge of the real, so that concepts, many of which seem to be elaborated out of what is given in immediate apprehension, are also regarded as vitiated by a like malady. The rôle of purpose and economy is exaggerated till these assume a creative power over concepts. Abstraction which is necessary for the apprehension of many concepts is assumed to mutilate the real. Immediate apprehension of such simple concepts as substance, identity, difference etc., is denied, inconvenient as this is to a naturalistic psychology; the objective reference ^{which} ~~it~~ is so characteristic of concepts is overlooked, and as a result of all this, and because of a desire to interpret all the facts of mental life in terms of utility to behaviour, concepts are hypostatized into tools or inventions, which are as different from things as a flower is from a garden - a view which involves the complete overthrow of the objective validity of all conceptual knowledge. We do not seem to be mistaken, then, in thinking that it is Dewey's biological psychology which contributes to his nominalistic Logic.

2. Truth or Logical Validity.

Dewey's view regarding truth seems to be so completely a corollary from his behaviourist psychology and his nominalistic view/

view regarding concepts that to set it in this setting is to understand it. If immediate apprehension provides us merely with stimuli to behaviour and concepts are ~~proved~~^{tools} whereby we adapt ourselves to our environment, then, it would seem that there can be only adaption^{ak} to environment, not knowledge. For, if knowledge is denied to immediate apprehension, then, the only way of attaining knowledge is through the mediation of concepts; but since these, according to Dewey, are only tools which help us to adapt ourselves to the real world, knowledge through this means is also precluded. Knowledge, whether of the mediate or of the immediate kind thus being denied, logically truth which is usually predicated of knowledge, acquires a new meaning in Dewey's hands in consonance with his behaviourism and comes to be applied to success in adaption^{ak}. Whatever leads to success in adaption^{at} or, as Dewey is fond^{of} saying, to "reconstruction of experience" is, then, what is true.

Thus Dewey tells us, Thinking is a "Method of reconstructing experience"¹ and experience is "a matter primarily of behaviour, a sensori-motor matter".² Thinking takes its departure from a situation of conflict and perplexity, which has arisen in the course of behaviour, and it makes numerous ~~possessions~~^{suggestions} as to how to get over this conflict, and ~~a~~^{the} suggestion which, when followed, successfully gets over the conflict, or "reconstructs experience" is true, the other suggestions which failed to do this are false.¹

Thus/

Reconstruction in Phil. pp. 141, 156.

" " " p. 138

Thus arises the theory that consequences test truth, meaning by this, consequences in relation to the "reconstruction of experience" that is necessary at the moment. "If ideas ... are instrumental to an active reorganisation of the given environment, to a removal of some specific trouble and perplexity, then the test of their validity and value is in accomplishing this work. If they succeed in their office, they are reliable, sound, valid, good, true. If they fail to clear up confusion, to eliminate defects, if they increase confusion, uncertainty and evil when they are acted upon, then they are false. Confirmation, corroboration, verification lie in works, consequences. Handsome is that handsome does. By their fruits shall ye know them".¹

This view, as Dewey himself tells us, so wholly rests on his view with regard to "the nature of thinking and ideas",² that it must be regarded as standing or falling with it. If there is no knowledge of the real world, then it would seem that there is no possible means of regarding the real world as the ultimate test of the truth of our hypothesis, as most will be disposed to think, so that the only test available for Dewey is ^{the} ~~a~~ wholly subjective one of testing a hypothesis by seeing what sort of consequences it leads to in behaviour.

And yet this theory seems strangely inconsistent when propounded by Dewey, for Dewey assumes throughout his argument an immediate face to face contact with facts, which fits rather ill with his subjectivism. For example he speaks of the necessity of/

1. Reconstruction of Phil. p. 156
 2. " " " p. 155

of "facing the facts", of "minute and extensive scrutinising" of facts, of careful observation of "brute facts"³, for the formation of our hypotheses and for the testing of their truth; but how all this is possible on his theory, it is difficult to see, for this theory as we have been trying to show seems in the end to deny all knowledge.

The subjectivism and wholesale scepticism that the theory involves seems thus to be unwarranted by its own realistic assumptions,⁴ and when further we have seen, as we did, in the sections previous to this that the psychology and the theory of concepts on which Dewey's theory of Truth is based, are themselves unsound, then it would seem that the theory as a whole has very little left to recommend itself.

Dewey's biological assumptions, then, seem to pervert his Logic to such an extent that Dewey is unable in the end to give us a Logic. Concepts come to be regarded as tools in adaptation, and truth as success in adaptation^{at}. Knowledge of the real world, whether mediate or immediate, the validity of which his own theory assumes and in the end rests on, comes however to be regarded as an enigma and a snare; and there is only adaptation. If the world of fact is thus wholly beyond our ken, we must see if the world of value - for our purposes, moral value - is at least within our grasp.

3. cp. Reconstruction in Phil. pp. 140 & 141; also Essays in Experimental Logic, pp. 139, 246.

4. cp. Essays in Experimental Logic, p. 35, 302.

SECTION III

ETHICS. (Expository)

Having considered in the previous section, the influence which Dewey's biological psychology exerts on his Logic, we are now to consider the view concerning moral values to which this Psychology and its consequent view regarding universals leads.

1. Nature of Moral Deliberation.

Dewey, in his intense love of the empirical and the concrete, bases his account of moral values on a psychological analysis of moral deliberation. He pleads for a system of morals based on study of human nature,¹ and when thus based he tells us, that Ethics will be found to be allied with physics and biology, and that the facts of man will be found to be continuous with those of the rest of nature². Without seeking to be critical, we shall attempt in what follows to state Dewey's view as far as possible in his own words.

Dewey concerns himself in his analysis of moral deliberation with moral deliberation of the fully reflective type.³ Such moral deliberation, Dewey finds, is always brought about by a moral situation; and he analyses the moral situation in order to find out what its characteristic features are,³ for it seems certain that such a situation should provide us with a clue as to what is sought to be accomplished in moral deliberation. In line with his/

1. cp. Human Nature and Conduct pp. 1-13.

2. cp. " " " " pp. 12-13.

3. cp. Dewey & Tufts: Ethics, Part 2 (written by Dewey, Ch. 1)

his general psychology of reflection, where conflict in activity is what provokes thought, Dewey discovers that the moral situation is brought about by an incompatibility - this time, an incompatibility between desires - and in line with his general psychology again, what is regarded as putting an end to such a situation is an action which overcomes this conflict. Thus Dewey tells us, "A moral situation is one in which judgment and choice are required antecedently to overt action. The practical meaning of the situation - that is to say the action needed to satisfy ^{it} - is not self-evident. It has to be searched for. There are conflicting desires and alternative apparent goods. What is needed is to find the right course of action, the right good!"¹ The defining traits of a moral situation, then, according to Dewey, are the presence in consciousness of a conflict of desires and the aim to discover from among such apparent goods, the right goods - meaning by the right goods, the action needed to satisfy the situation.

If then the moral situation is brought about by a conflict between desires, when the characteristic question is regarding the right course of action, (right, understood in the above sense), we have now to ask what are the distinctive elements in the kind of deliberation ^{to} through which the moral situation leads. This, Dewey finds, is in general not different from what takes place in deliberation regarding anything that is to be done. So he begins with an analysis of general deliberation. Thus in ^{discussing} ~~dispensing~~ the nature/

1. Reconstruction in Phil. p. 163

nature and source of moral knowledge, he says, "Our first problem is then to investigate the nature of ordinary judgments upon what it is best or wise to do, or, in ordinary language the nature of deliberation. We begin with a summary assertion that deliberation is a dramatic rehearsal (in imagination) of various competing possible lines of action. It starts from the blocking of ~~a~~ efficient overt action, due to that conflict of prior habit and newly released impulse to which reference has been made. Then each habit, each impulse, involved in the temporary suspense of overt action takes its turn in being tried out. Deliberation is an experiment in finding out what the ~~the~~ various lines of possible action are really like ... Each conflicting habit and impulse takes its turn in projecting itself upon the screen of imagination. It unrolls a picture of its future history, of the career it would have if it were given head. ... We can judge its nature, assign its meaning, only by following it into the situation, whether it leads, noting the objects against which it runs and seeing how they rebuff or unexpectedly encourage it".¹

The content of deliberation would then seem to be, according to Dewey, "the making various combinations of selected elements of habits and impulses, to see what the resultant action would be like if it were entered upon"², or, in other words, the discovering of the meaning of various lines of activity suggested by habit and impulse, by following them to the consequences to which they would lead if entered upon. But even more important than this question regarding/

regarding the what of deliberation is the question regarding the wherefore of deliberation or the aim in deliberation, for all this effort to discover the meaning of various proposed ~~lines~~ of activity is meaningless apart from the purpose ~~for~~ which deliberation is entered upon. This ~~is~~ of special importance in discussing moral deliberation, and this is the point that Dewey next turns to, first of all with regard to deliberation in general.

The method that Dewey adopts in discovering the aim of deliberation is to find out what puts an end to deliberation, for when deliberation ceases, the presumption is that the purpose for which it arose has been fulfilled. In the realm of conduct, of course, what puts an end to deliberation, is choice; so Dewey concerns himself with discovering what choice means "To say that (deliberation) ceases is to say that choice, decision, takes place. What then is choice? Simply hitting in imagination upon an object which furnishes an adequate stimulus to the recovery of overt action".¹ This ~~common~~, then ~~common~~, would seem to be aim of deliberation, viz., to bring about what Dewey often calls, reconstruction. "Choice is made as soon as some habit, or some combination of elements of habits and impulse, finds a way fully open. Then energy is released. The mind is made up, composed, unified. As long as deliberation pictures shoals or rocks or troublesome gales as marking the route of a contemplated voyage, deliberation goes on. But when the various factors fit harmoniously together, when imagination finds no annoying hindrance, when there is a picture of open seas, filled sails/



sails and favouring winds the voyage is definitely entered upon. This decisive direction of action constitutes choice".¹ "Choice, then, is the emergence of a unified preference out of competing preferences. Biases that had held one another in check now, temporarily at least, reinforced one another, and constitute a unified attitude. The moment arrives when imagination pictures an objective consequence of action which supplies an adequate stimulus and releases definitive action".² This provides an answer to the question regarding the aim of deliberation. "All deliberation is a search for a way to act... Its office is to facilitate stimulation,"² to provide a way of acting which will unify the competing tendencies, in short to bring about reconstruction.

So far, however, we have been dealing only with general deliberation; moral deliberation is not, Dewey will tell us, any difference^t. It only carries this process to completion and sees that the unification brought about is not an arbitrary one, but one which "does justice to all ^{facts} types", i.e., to all the elements in conflict. "... there is reasonable and unreasonable choice. The objects thought of may simply stimulate some impulse or habit to a pitch of intensity where it is temporarily irresistible^{is}. It then overrides all competitors and secures for itself the sole right of way. The object looms large in imagination, it swells to fill the field. It allows no room for alternatives; it absorbs us, enraptures^{us}, captures us away, ^{sweeps} takes us off our feet by its own attractive/

1. Human Nature & Conduct pp. 192-3
 2. " " " p. 295-193

attractive force. Then choice is arbitrary, unreasonable. But the object thought of may be one which stimulates by unifying, harmonising, different competing tendencies. It may release an activity in which all are fulfilled, not indeed, in their original form, but in a 'sublimated' fashion ... "¹

In deliberation of this complete type, "To every shade of imagined circumstance there is a vibrating response; and to every complex situation a sensitiveness as to its integrity a feeling of whether it does justice to all facts, or overrides some to the advantage of others. Decision is reasonable when deliberation is so conducted"² "Choice is reasonable when it induces us to act ... with regard to the claim for each of the competing habits and impulses".³ From this it is plain that moral deliberation is not different from any other kind of deliberation, only it is more thorough. It also seeks reconstruction in activity, but the reconstruction it strives to attain is one that will do justice to all the contending elements of the situation. "In short, a truly moral (or right) act is one which is intelligent in an emphatic and peculiar sense; it is a reasonable act. It is not merely one which is thought of, and thought of as good, at the moment of action, but one which will continue to be thought of as 'good' in the most alert and persistent reflection. For by 'reasonable' action we mean such action as recognises and observes all the necessary conditions."⁴

"The/

- Human Nature & Conduct pp. 193 & 4
- " " " p. 194
- " " " pp. 194 & 5
- Dewey & Tufts: Ethics, p. 307.

"The traditional association of justice and reason has good psychological ~~back~~ back of it. Both imply a balanced distribution of thought and energy," "a balanced arrangement of propulsive activities."¹

This, then, is the sort of analysis that underlies Dewey's Ethical theory. On this view, moral deliberation is a process which is entered upon in a situation characterised by conflicting desires, in which process ~~the~~ various conflicting proposals prompted by habits and impulses, at any one time, are considered with regard to the consequences ^{to} through which they would lead, if adopted; the whole process being guided by an aim to reconstruct the situation, moral deliberation, distinguishing itself from ordinary deliberation regarding what it is wise to do, by its greater thoroughness in taking into consideration all the contending elements of the situation.

While this is said, there is an important negative aspect of Dewey's ethical theory which, in this account of the matter, fails to come to notice, but which nevertheless may be regarded as forming a very distinctive part of his theory. It may be expressed by saying that the process of moral deliberation is not a process of subsumption. All that is valuable in Dewey's Ethical teaching seems to centre round this point. He pleads under this head for an untiring earnestness in the moral life which will not be content with regarding an act as of moral value simply because it appears to be a case of such and such a general rule/

rule. He insists that each case be judged on its own merits, according as it ameliorates existing evils, ^{and} that it be studied with as great minuteness and ^{scrupulousness} ~~scrupulousness~~ as the physicist employs in his researches; for, he tells us, since each situation is "unique" and "non-reduplicable", it is utter foolishness to regard it as morally evaluated when it is merely brought under a general rule. "... the primary significance of the unique and morally ultimate character of the concrete situation is to transfer the weight and burden of morality to intelligence."¹

"This ill is just the specific ill that it is. It never is an exact duplicate of anything else. Consequently the good of the situation has to be discovered, projected and attained on the basis of the exact defect and trouble to be rectified. It cannot intelligently be injected into the situation from without".²

"Every act, every deed is individual. What is the sense in having fixed general rules ...?"³ "It is worth noting that the underlying issue is, after all, only the same as that which has been already threshed out in physical enquiry. There ^{to} ~~to~~ it long seemed as if rational assurance and demonstration ^{tion} ~~tion~~ could be attained only if we began with universal conceptions and subsumed particular cases under them. The men who initiated the methods of enquiry that are now everywhere adopted were denounced in their day (and sincerely) as subverters of truth and foes of science. If they have won in the end, it is because ... the methods of universals confirmed prejudices and sanctioned ideas that had gained/

1. Reconstruction in Phil. p. 163
2. " " " p. 169
3. Human Nature & Conduct p. 240.

gained currency irrespective of evidence for them. While placing the initial and final weight upon the individual case, stimulated painstaking inquiry into facts and examination of principles.... After all, then, we are only pleading for the adoption in moral reflection of the logic that has been proved to make for security, stringency and fertility in passing judgments upon physical phenomena. And the reason is the same. The old method in spite of its nominal and ~~ethistic~~ ^{esthetic} worship of reason discouraged reason, because it hindered the operation of scrupulous and unremitting inquiry"¹ "... its effect was merely to encourage intellectual laziness, reliance upon authority and blind acceptance of conceptions that had somehow become traditional. The actual advance in science did not begin till man broke away from this method."² "In morals now as in physical science then, the work of intelligence in reaching such relative certainty ... as is open to man is retarded by the false notion of fixed antecedent truths ... Moral facts, i.e. the concrete careers of special courses of action, are not studied. There is not counter part to clinical medicine. Rigid classifications forced upon facts are relied upon. And all this is done as it used to be done in natural science, in praise of Reason and in fear of the variety and fluctuation of actual ^{happenings} happiness."³ In such terms as these Dewey advocates the view that moral deliberation of the ideally complete type is not so simple as the subsuming of a particular act under a general rule, but requires much thought and searching enquiry. Since each situation is/

1. Reconstruction in Phil. pp. 164-5
2. Human Nature & Conduct p. 242
3. " " " p. 243

is unique, it must be dealt with on its own merits. Its good cannot be injected into it from without, even though this injection come from a general rule which has acquired a "well-earned prestige". Moral deliberation, whose characteristic features we have traced above, is then not a process of subsumption.

2. Moral Ideals.

An important part of Dewey's Ethical teaching is concerned with advocating what may be called an "instrumental" theory of moral ideals. It is this that we must now state.

In his latest writings, if there is any one special doctrine that Dewey may be said to contend against, it is the doctrine of abstract universals. He is intent on showing as we saw in his Logic that these inventions, as he regards them, are but "classification\$for a purpose", and that they have no more than an instrumental value. In line with this his general theory is his view regarding moral ideals which ^{as} we shall see are for him generalisations from experience, human products, which have their reason for existing in their service in guiding moral deliberation. Ideals, then, Dewey would tell us, are to be called off from their remote home in the heavens and made to work for a living. "In the classic philosophy the ideal world is essential^{ly} a haven in which man finds rest from the storms of life; it is an asylum in which he takes refuge from the troubles of existence with the calm assurance that it alone is supremely real. When the belief that knowledge is active and operative takes hold of men the ideal ~~ye~~alm is no longer something aloof and separate; it is rather that/

that collection of imagined possibilities that stimulates men to new efforts and realisations!"¹ "... the picture of the better is shaped so that it may become an instrumentality of action, while in the classic view ^{the} Idea belongs ready-made in a noumenal world."¹ The theoretical arguments which Dewey uses to remove the halo from ideals and to regard them as "tools" in reconstruction, centre round his view regarding their origin, nature and function.

a) Origin. Dewey speaks of moral ideals as "patterns for use in re-organisation of the actual scene".³ What he means by this may be seen from his view regarding how they come into existence. "They arise", he says, "out of natural effects or consequences which in the beginning are hit upon, stumbled upon so far as any purpose is concerned. Men like some of the consequences and dislike others. Henceforth (or till attraction and repulsion alter) attaining or averting similar consequences are aims or ends ... Meantime of course imagination is busy. Old consequences are enhanced, recombined, modified in imagination. Invention operates. Actual consequences, i.e., effects which have happened in the past become possible future consequences of acts still to be performed."² Interest in ideals then rises and develops, it would seem, in a way not unlike interest in anything else, say, e.g., shooting. "Men shoot and throw. At first this is done as an 'instinctive' or natural reaction to some situation. The result when it is observed gives a new meaning to/

1. Reconstruction in Phil. p. 118
2. Human Nature & Conduct p. 225
3. Human nature & Conduct pp. 53 & 54

to activity. Henceforth men in throwing and shooting think of it in terms of its outcome; they act intelligently or have an end. Liking the activity in its acquired meaning, they do not only 'take aim' when they throw instead of throwing at random, but they find or make targets at which to aim. This is the origin and nature of 'goals of action'.¹ Ideals, then, according to Dewey rise out of random events which happen to be liked, and are set up in a generalised form, so that they may guide us in producing similar consequences. This is the positive way in which ideals rise; but there is also a negative way. Ideals rise not only as reminders of consequences that were original^{ly} liked but also as the opposites of consequences that are disliked, or found in some way defective. Thus "The beginning is with a wish an emotional reaction against the present state of things and a hope for something different. Action fails to connect satisfactorily with surrounding conditions. Thrown back upon itself, it projects itself in an imagination of a scene which if it were present would afford satisfaction. This picture is often called an aim, more often an ideal. But in itself it is a fancy which may be only a phantasy, a dream, a castle in the air. In itself it is a romantic embellishment of the present; at the best it is material for poetry or the novel."² Ideals then rise out of consequences that are liked, liked either because such consequences were actually experienced in the past and found to be liked or because they are found to be lacking under present conditions and are/

are held to be the very opposites of the factors in the present situation that are disliked. Ideals then originate as outgrowths from experience. Stated negatively, ideals are not unique in origin, and are not revealed to us by some "original faculty of illumination"¹. "They... are not things self-enclosed to be known by introspection"², but have their "source in objective conditons".³ Their origin then is "empirical", "natural", "concrete". They come about as generalisations from past experiences which were liked, or as reactions from defects in their present situation that are disliked. Whatever it be, their home is human experience, not, Dewey would tell us, some far off noumenal world. If so, what is their nature? What stuff are moral ideals made of?

b) The nature of Moral Ideals. The very fact of their origin in ways described above convinces Dewey of their nature. They are not rules "which simply descend out of the blue sky" and which "have only the most mechanical and external relation to the individual acts to be judged".⁴ On the other hand, they are the guiding principles of life which have, as we have seen, grown out of experience and have all their meaning within experience. The essential mistake in Kant's Ethics, according to Dewey, is that ideals are for Kant deprived of their natural home.⁵ Dewey wishes to reinstate them within experience, and in doing so he finds/

- . Human Nature & Conduct, p. 187
- . " " " p. 56
- . " " " p. 53
- . Dewey & Tufts Ethics, p. 325
- . cp. Human Nature & Conduct p. 245
- Reconstruction in Phil. pp. 98-9

finds that their nature is explicable purely in "empirical" terms. The nature of the ideal is constituted by seizing upon the experiences that are liked and are wanting in the present situation and which in some form were originally seen to have good consequences ('good', in the sense of 'liked'), by abstracting them from their original setting and surrounding them with a certain emotional halo. Thus in speaking of Plato's Ideas in this connection, he says, "What are they, these Forms and Essences which so profoundly influenced for centuries the course of science and theology, save the objects of ordinary experience with their blemishes removed, their imperfections eliminated, their lacks rounded out, their suggestions and hints fulfilled? What are they in short but the objects of familiar life divinised because reshaped by the idealising imagination to meet the demands of desire in just those respects in which actual experience is disappointing?"¹ Moral ideals, then, are generalisations from the goods and the ill\$ that are found in experience.² If such be their nature, why do they exist at all? What purpose do they serve? This takes us to the important question of the function of moral ideals.

c) The Function of Moral Ideals. Seeing that for Dewey moral ideals are generalised expressions from experience for liked consequences, it is not very difficult to see what according to him is the function of moral ideals. Now that

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the mysterious halo ^{which} ~~has~~ surrounds them is removed, they are seen to be but tools to present living. Their purpose is to guide us in conduct by suggesting to us those lines of activity which bring about consequences ~~which~~ have the virtue of having the testimony of experience to their being liked. The moral import of ideals is, therefore, above all intellectual. They guide deliberation in situations ^{requiring} ~~regarding~~ reorganisation; "it is the part of wisdom to compare different cases, to gather together the ills from which humanity suffers, and to generalise the corresponding goods into classes. Health, wealth, industry, temperance, amiability, courtesy, learning, aesthetic capacity, initiative, courage, patience, enterprise, thoroughness and a multitude of other generalised ends are acknowledged as goods. But the value of this systematisation is intellectual or analytical. Classifications suggest possible traits to be on the lookout for in studying a particular case; they suggest methods of action to be tried in removing the inferred causes of ill. They are tools of insight; their value is in promoting an individualised response in the individual situation".¹ This, then, is the function which moral ideals are to perform; they are to serve as "intellectual instruments for analysing individual or unique situations".² They are "tools of insight"³ and their value is intellectual.

So much is plain. But there is a negative aspect to Dewey's theory which is important, and which may be expressed by saying/

1. Reconstruction in Phil. p. 169
2. " " " pp. 162-3
3. " " " p. 169

saying that the import of moral ideals is intellectual, not imperative, i.e. that ideals are to be regarded, not as "goals" at realising which we ought to aim in conduct, but are rather to be regarded as ^{bas}principals which give us intellectual guidance in reconstruction. Thus he tells us, "The entire popular notion of 'ideals' is infected with this conception of some fixed end beyond activity at which we should aim. According to this view ends-in-themselves come before aims. We have a moral aim only as our purpose coincides with some end-in-itself. We ought to aim at the latter whether we actually do or not"¹. But such a view of them Dewey tells us must be given up root and branch.² "Ends are foreseen consequences which arise in the course of activity and which are employed to give activity added meaning and to direct its further course. They are in no sense ends of action. In being ends of deliberation, they are redirecting pivots in action"² If asked why they should not be regarded as ends to action, Dewey tells us, that when moral ideals are so regarded, they become "frozen and isolated"³ "It makes no difference whether the 'end' is 'natural' good like health or a 'moral' good like honesty. Set up as complete and exclusive, as demanding and justifying action as a means to itself, it leads to narrowness; in extreme cases fanaticism, inconsiderateness, arrogance and hypocrisy ... The use of intelligence to discover the objects that will best operate as a releasing and unifying stimulus in the existing situation is discounted. One reminds

oneself that one's end is justice or charity or professional achievement or putting over a deal for a needed public improvement, and further questionings and qualms are stilled."¹

Thus the chief reason that Dewey gives for not regarding moral ideals as imperatives is that to regard them so, is to set them up as fixed and final and as demanding action as a means to themselves; and this is, so Dewey tells us, to encourage in sincerity and hypocrisy, and to lead to an avoidance of a careful examination of the consequences of our acts.² Moral ideals then are not "goals of action", they are guides in deliberation. Their authority is but the authority of any classification, like e.g. the classification of the diseases that the physician makes use of.³ They suggest possible traits to be on the lookout for in studying a particular case.⁴ Their value is intellectual⁴. They have every right, then, to guide the moral man in his conduct, but not to direct or prescribe it. Their function is not to give law, but to give light.

3. The Criterion in Moral Deliberation.

There is no doubt that the central problem of ethical theory is that regarding the Summum Bonum or the ultimate criterion in moral deliberation. But one is apt to be surprised in reading Dewey's latest books to find Dewey advocating that we give up the idea of a Summum Bonum in Ethics. He tells us that to set up a Summum Bonum in Ethics is to revert to olden times/

1. Human Nature & Conduct pp. 227-8
 2. op. Human Nature & Conduct pp. 227-233
 3. Reconstruction in Phil. p. 168
 4. p. 169

times and to proclaim a belated monarchy at a time when democracy has been legally initiated into power. "Is not", he asks, "the belief in the single final and ultimate (end?) ... and intellectual product of that feudal organisation which is disappearing historically ...?"¹ He will have no such single, ultimate end. "Ethical theory.. has been singularly hypnotised by the notion that its business is to discover some final end or good or some ultimate and supreme law. This is the common element among the diversity of theory."² "The question arises whether the way out of the confusion and conflict is not to go to the root of the matter by questioning this common element"¹. "It has been repeatedly suggested that the present limit of intellectual reconstruction lies in the fact that it has not as yet been seriously applied in the moral and social disciplines. Would not this further application demand precisely that we advance to a belief in a plurality of changing, moving, individualised goods and ends...?"¹

The roots of this denial of a Summun Bonum are to be found in his conception regarding the nature of universals, as we shall see. Dewey however seems not to pay much heed to such theoretical considerations. He is more concerned with showing the practical consequences that such a conception as that of a Summun Bonum ^{seems to imply. He points out that it is the idea of a Summun Bonum} that has kept moral theory fruitlessly interested in abstract speculations instead of contributing to the solution of moral and social problems.³ It lands us, he tells us,

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Reconstruction in Phil. p. 162
 " " " p. 161
 " " " pp. 161, 162 & 170

into a "bog of disputes that cannot be settled".¹ The belief in a single end or Summum Bonum leads, he tells us, to fanaticism.² It provides "a technique of avoiding a reasonable survey of consequences"³. "It is wilful folly to fasten upon some single end or consequence which is liked, and permit the view of that to blot from perception all other undesired and undesirable consequences. It is liked supposing that when a finger held close to the eye covers up a distant mountain the finger is really larger than the mountain. Not the end - in the singular - justifies the mean^g; for there is no such thing as the single all-important end."⁴

If the Summum Bonum is thus to be got rid of, we must ask if there is any ultimate criterion of moral valuation at all. In our account of Dewey's view regarding the nature of moral deliberation, we discover^{ed} that Dewey distinguished between what he called "reasonable" and "unreasonable" choice. An unreasonable choice, we saw, was for him one that was made with no consideration ~~of~~ all the contending elements of the situation, but was a case of ^{yielding} ~~merely~~ to the most passionate impulse of the moment, and a "reasonable" choice was one that was made in the light of all the contending elements of the situation and had the virtue of harmonising and unifying all these tendencies. From this, a ~~cri~~terion of reasonableness or of moral value can be derived. An act is reasonable or morally valuable when it leads to harmonised activity; and since harmonisation means for Dewey harmonisation of factors at any one time in conflict, his criterion may perhaps be better expressed by saying that an act is

reasonable/

Reconstruction in Phil. p. 166
" " p. 168

Human Nature & Conduct p. 230

" " " p. 229

reasonable when it maintains an equilibrium amongst contending elements, or in Dewey's words, when it produces a "balanced arrangement of propulsive activities"¹, i.e. when it leads to the most stable reconstruction of experience that is possible in that particular situation.²

Further, since for Dewey selfhood is a growing something "in process of making"³, reconstruction in growth becomes the chief end, for unless the reconstruction was adapted to this changing, moving self, the reconstruction would not be a reconstruction at all. Thus he tells us that "growing, or the continuous reconstruction of experience is the only end".⁴

In consonance with this, is his insistence on the present as the object of moral deliberation. He reiterates over and over again that "The present, not the future, is ours".⁵ This dictum gains renewed meaning when it is seen in the light of the criterion which Dewey has formulated. The insistence on the present is then seen to be the logical outcome of holding that the moral end is the maintaining of an equilibrium in each situation as it rises. If this is the moral end, then, of course, as Dewey says, "the good is now or never."⁶ In this connection he says, "The good, satisfaction, 'end', of growth of present action in/

Human Nature & Conduct p. 198

Reconstruction in Phil. p. 184

Human Nature & Conduct p. 137

Reconstruction in Phil. p. 184

Human Nature & Conduct p. 207.

" " " p. 290. (underlining mine)

in shades and scope of meaning is the only good within our control, and the only one accordingly, for which responsibility exists. The rest is luck, fortune. And the tragedy of the moral notion most insisted upon by the morally self-conscious is the ^{leg}regretation of the only good which can fully engage thought, namely present meaning ^{of} to action, to the rank of an incident of a remote good, whether that future good be defined as pleasure or perfection, or salvation, or attainment of virtuous character".¹ The present situation, then, with its incompatible tendencies is what needs reconstruction, and the morally valuable act is that which brings about this present reconstruction by producing an equilibrium among them. Thus "There is seen to be but one issue involved in all reflections upon conduct: the rectifying of present troubles, the harmonising of present incompatibilities by projecting a course of action which gathers into itself the meaning of them all!"²

One consequence of this view is that the ^eemphasis in determining whether an act is morally good or bad is on consequences, as Dewey never tires of saying. "Certainly nothing can justify or condemn means except ends, results."³ Do the consequences of an act bring about this equilibrium or do they not? If they do, then the act is morally good: if not, it is bad. "Enquiry, discovery, take the same place in morals that they have come to occupy in sciences of nature. Validation, demonstration become experimental, a matter of consequences. ... shifting/

shifting the issue to analysis of a specific situation makes enquiry obligatory and alert observation of consequences imperative. No past decision nor old principle can ever be wholly relied upon to justify a course of action. No amount of pains taken in forming a purpose in a definite case is final; the consequences of its adoption must be carefully noted, and a purpose held only as a working hypothesis until results confirm its rightness."¹ " .. experimental logic when carried into morals makes every quality that is judged to be good according as it ^{contributes} ~~attributes~~ to amelioration of existing ills."²

This production and maintenance of an equilibrium amongst incompatible tendencies is, then, the ultimate criterion in all moral valuation, and a definition of the moral good is expressed by saying that "Good consists in the meaning that is experienced to belong to an activity when conflict and entanglement of various incompatible impulses and habits terminate in a unified orderly release in action,"³ and when the unification thus gained is brought about not by suppressing incompatible tendencies but by co-ordinating them into a "balanced arrangement".⁴

Our account of Dewey's criterion, however, cannot be regarded as complete till we have stated the two formulations of the Moral Good which Dewey sometimes puts forward and which may be regarded as the possible forms which, in his opinion, his criterion is capable of assuming. One of these is expressed by saying that the "growth of present action in shades and scope of

1. Reconstruction in Phil. pp. 174-5
 2. " " pp. 172
 3. Human Nature & Conduct p. 210
 4. " " pp. 210-1

meaning is the only good within our control,"¹ that "good is al-
ways found in a present growth of significance in activity",² and
that progress consists in the "complication and extension of the
significance found within experience."³ The other may be expressed
by saying that the Good consists in the full development of the
capacities of individuals. "Government, business, art, religion,
all social institutions have a meaning, a purpose. That purpose is
to set free and to develop the capacities of human individuals
without respect to race, sex, class or economic status. And this
is all one with saying that the test of their value is the extent
to which they educate every individual into the full stature of
his possibility. Democracy has many meanings, but if it has a moral
meaning, it is found in resolving that the supreme test of all polit-
ical institutions and industrial arrangements shall be the contribut-
ion they make to the all-around growth of every member of society,"⁴

The relation of these formulae, or if we may so call them,
ideals, to his criterion, is seen from the fact that this criterion
lays down that the incompatible tendencies of the self should not be
suppressed but coordinated, the implication being that when they are
suppressed, the meaning of the activity which suppresses them be-
comes dwindled to a point, there being no opportunity of its meaning
being widened and deepened by its being seen in relation to a vari-
ety/

Human Nature and Conduct, p. 280.

" " " " p. 293.

" " " " p. 283.

Reconstruction in Philosophy, p. 186; also Human Nature etc., pp. 293&4.

ety of considerations,¹ (thus leading to the formulating of the first Ideal) and that in so far as these tendencies are suppressed, that part of the agent's nature which they represent is not allowed to develop, but at the worst, crushed out of existence² (thus leading to the formulating of the second Ideal). These two Ideals, then, of increase of meaning, and full development of capacity, appear to be based in the end on the criterion of which we have taken note, and much will therefore seem to depend on the validity of this criterion.

Human Nature and Conduct, pp. 197&283.
 " " " " pp. 164-66, 293&4.

SECTION IV.

ETHICS. (Critical)

Having traced in outline the main points in Dewey's ethical theory, we are now ready for a critical estimate of the same, taking note especially of the influence on his ethical theory of his biological Psychology and its consequent nominalistic Logic.

1. Nature of Moral Deliberation.

In our psychological section, we noticed that the chief defect in Dewey's psychology of the moral consciousness was that it tended to overlook the ultimate moral attitude which is so characteristic of that consciousness. This, we observed, was the result of his attempt to interpret the facts of human nature from an strictly biological point of view. How far such a point of view gives us an adequate account of moral deliberation is what we must now consider.

Moral deliberation, we were told by Dewey, is a process which is entered into in a moral situation, a moral situation being described as one in which there was a conflict of desires and which was characterised by an aim to find the "right good". Whatever this means, it appears that this cannot be an adequate analysis of the moral situation, unless the agent concerned were assumed to be possessed of the morally valuing attitude. That this must be so, would seem to follow from the fact that there may be a situation in which there is a conflict amongst desires, where the characteristic aim is to find the "right good" (the "right good" being/

being understood in Dewey's sense of that good which will most satisfactorily dispose of the conflict), and yet the situation not be entitled to be called a moral situation. For instance, I may desire to eat my cake and have it, and I may take time to deliberate over the matter till I discover the "right good", but in spite of all this, it will be admitted that such a situation as such is distinctly non-moral, and would become moral only when the moral value of my eating my cake or having it comes into question, i.e., when the self is controlled by the morally valuing attitude. This morally valuing attitude, then, would seem to be what is most distinctive of and most fundamental to the moral situation; and yet, strangely enough, it hardly seems to gain recognition in Dewey's analysis of the moral situation. It is quite possible that Dewey assumes that one of the desires in conflict in a moral situation is a desire to realise what is of moral value. But the reason for insisting that this be not merely assumed, but be explicitly stated in what purports to be an analysis of the moral situation, is that it seems to be, as we have been, trying to show, what is most characteristic of the moral situation. Dewey seems to be aware of this when he speaks of the characteristic aim in a moral situation as the aim to find the "right good"; but unfortunately on the meaning that Dewey has given to these words - viz., that which will most satisfactorily dispose of the conflict - the "right good" may, as we have seen, be either moral or non-moral/

moral. It is not surprising that Dewey is thus unable to distinguish sufficiently clearly between the moral and the non-moral, for if, as we have seen, his biological psychology tends to overlook the ultimate moral attitude which is distinctive of the moral consciousness, then it would seem that there is hardly any way of distinguishing between the moral and the non-moral. We shall see how this one defect in his Psychology colours much of his ethical thinking. Here it is only necessary to point out that Dewey's analysis of the moral situation seems to fail just in this, that it does not take account of the morally valuing attitude, which however, it appears that it must assume, if the situation which it analyses is one which brings about a process of deliberation which can be called moral.

This same defect is what seems to underlie also Dewey's account of the nature of moral deliberation. In our exposition of the matter, we noticed that Dewey analysed the nature of general deliberation regarding what it is wise to do, in order to discover what the nature of moral deliberation is. This in itself may be quite legitimate, as giving us real insight into the manner in which all deliberation regarding what is to be done proceeds. This seems to be the chief merit of Dewey's vivid and dramatic account of deliberation. But there is obviously an important difference between deliberation which is prompted by motives of prudence, and deliberation where the primary motive is to discover the moral value of the situation - a difference which would appear to make illegitimate/

illegitimate the reducing of moral deliberation in terms of general deliberation. The difference seems to be precisely this, that while in the one case the attitude of the self does not seem to be that which seems necessarily involved in moral valuation, ~~in~~ the other, the self is controlled throughout, in so far as its deliberation is moral by the morally valuing attitude. The point is obvious and is one which Dewey himself will concede. Thus he tells us, "A radical distinction... exists between deliberation where the only question is whether to invest money in this bond or that stock, and deliberation where the primary decision is as to the kind (underlining not mine) of activity which is to be engaged in. Definite quantitative calculation is possible in the former case because a decision as to kind or direction of action does not have to be made. It has been decided already... that the man is to be an investor. The significant thing in decisions proper, the course of action, the kind of a self (underlining mine) simply doesn't enter in; it isn't in question"¹ "... the thing actually at stake in any serious deliberation is...what kind of a person one is to become, what sort of self is in the making, what kind of a world is making"². If so, it would appear that what is at stake in moral deliberation is precisely such questions regarding the intrinsic value of various kinds of selfhood that our acts imply, while in prudential deliberation, if we may so call what we have till now spoken of as general deliberation, what seems to be at stake is not/

1. Human Nature & Conduct, pp. 217&218.
2. " " " pp. 216&217.

such questions of intrinsic value at all, but how to procure ways and means to bring about what the self has come to desire, whether this be morally good or bad. There are two reasons why Dewey, in spite of seeing the distinction between prudential deliberation and moral deliberation, is unable, on his theory, to abide by it (as is evidenced by the fact that he goes to an analysis of general deliberation regarding what it is wise to do in order to discover all that is characteristic of moral deliberation). One is that his psychology, as we have already seen, prevents him from taking account of the morally valuing attitude which by its absence in the one case and presence in the other, chiefly differentiates the one from the other. The other reason is equally important, and to a consideration of it we must now turn.

In examining Dewey's Logic, we discovered that one view which was responsible for much in Dewey's logical theory was traceable to his psychology, which denied that in sense-perception we have an immediate apprehension of fact. Precisely the same doctrine applied to the sphere of moral values is, as we shall see, what is responsible for much in Dewey's ethical theory. A psychology which is unable to take account of immediate apprehension of fact seems unable also to take account of immediate apprehension of value, with the result that value comes to mean for Dewey something that is "instituted" after complicated processes of deliberation and reflection, and as never immediately apprehended. "... just as determining a thing to be food means considering its relation/

lation to digestive organs, to its distribution and ultimate destination in the system, so determining a thing found good (merely, treated in a certain way) to be good means precisely ceasing to look at it as a direct, self-sufficient thing and considering it in its consequences - that is, in its relation to a large set of other things"¹ "Unfortunately for discussions 'to value' means two radically different things: to prize and to appraise, to esteem and to estimate... I call them radically different because to prize names a practical, non-intellectual attitude, and to appraise names a judgment. That men love and hold things dear, that they cherish and care for some things, and neglect and condemn other things, is an undoubted fact. To call these things values is just to repeat that they are loved and cherished. To call them values and then import into them the traits of objects of valuation, or to import into values, meaning valuated objects, the traits which things possess as held dear, is to confuse the theory of judgments of value past all remedy."² For Dewey then only that can be rightly called a value which has been "instituted" after processes of [valuation and] reflection. Immediate valuation is for him no valuation at all. It is merely "a way of behaving", a "mode of organic reaction" and not an "act of apprehension"³ and therefore can never give us value.

It is easily seen how if immediate apprehension of values is thus denied, the distinction between prudential deliberation and moral deliberation/

1. Essays in Experimental Logic, p. 357
2. " " " " pp. 354-5
3. " " " " p. 354

ion breaks down, for in this case moral deliberation cannot be concerned with the value of various kinds of acts, but only as in prudential deliberation with discovering ways and means to bring about what is immediately liked or desired. That it cannot be concerned with the value of various kinds of acts follows from the fact that in order to deliberate about values at all, these values it would seem must be apprehended as values. For example, I cannot deliberate as to whether I ought to say a falsehood in a particular situation unless I apprehended, in however imperfect a manner, the value of various courses of activity that lie open to me in that situation. Unless I apprehended thus immediately the moral value of each course of activity as it presents itself in imagination, it would seem that there can be no such thing as moral deliberation. Mediate valuation, then, would seem to be impossible without immediate valuation, but since Dewey denies immediate apprehension of values moral deliberation, properly so called, would appear to be hardly possible on his hypothesis, with the result that in the end the difference between prudential deliberation and moral deliberation disappears and the theory arises that the difference between the two kinds of deliberation lies in the fact that moral deliberation is more thorough than prudential deliberation. But to regard moral deliberation as thus a more perfect form of prudential deliberation seems not only contrary to common ethical thinking on the matter - in as much as this thinking distinguishes virtue from prudence - but would appear to be contrary to Dewey's own sharp distinction between prudential/

entia~~l~~ deliberation and moral deliberation. Once again, then, it would seem that we must lay this fault to the charge of Dewey's Psychology which is unable to take account of an immediate apprehension of values, which, nevertheless as we shall see, is what his account of the nature of moral deliberation throughout assumes and which comes into full view in the sharp distinction which we noted that he makes between prudential deliberation and moral deliberation.

That an immediate apprehension of values is assumed in Dewey's account of moral deliberation is seen from the fact that he speaks in very clear terms about deliberation not being a process of quantitative measurement or of calculation of profit and loss¹, but as a "dramatic rehearsal" in which there is a "running commentary of likes and dislikes"². This in itself, it is true, is not the same as acknowledging an immediate apprehension of values, but it is, it would seem, to include such immediate apprehension within it; for whatever else values may be, other things being equal, they seem to present themselves as what immediately attract the self which is capable of appreciating them. Thus, for example, in deliberation the just act as such will always present itself to the ordinary man as attractive and to be desired. It is this fact that Dewey seems to make use of when he says that in deliberation we are faced with conflicting desires and "apparent goods"; but the reason why in spite of thus making use of the fact of immediate apprehension of values under the general category of what is immediately desired, he still finds it possible to deny the capacity for an immediate

apprehension of values/

1. Human Nature etc., pp. 199&222.

2. " " " p. 201.

values, seems to be that he has failed to distinguish between what is desired and what is apprehended as a value.

While this ^{is} said, it is necessary to remark that it is not forgotten that, as we saw, Dewey distinguished very carefully between what is immediately desired and what is judged to be a value; but a glance at his general theory of value- into which we cannot enter here- will sufficiently show that the word value is restricted by him to mean what is usually called economic value. Witness, e.g., his statements, "...to consider whether (a thing) is good and how good it is, is to ask how it , as if acted¹ upon will operate in promoting a course of action." "...the lobster will give me present enjoyment and future indigestion if I eat it...The question is not what the thing will do- I may be quite clear about that, it is whether to perform the act which will actualise its potentiality. ...what force shall the thing as means be given? Shall I take it as means to present enjoyment or as a (negative) condition of future health? When its status in these respects is determined, its value is determined..."² Value, then, according to Dewey is capacity for promoting a course of action, i.e., capacity for being employed as means to attaining an end that is desired.³ But such economic value- for such it seems to be- is not what we are concerned with in distinguishing between what is immediately liked and what is apprehended as a value, economic value distinguishing itself from the sort of value with which we/

we are here concerned by the fact that the thing to which economic value is attributed is valued not because of itself but because of something else which follows from it as effect. While therefore fully agreeing with Dewey in his distinction between what is immediately desired and what is regarded as of economic value, we must feel that this can have no bearing on the distinction that we are trying to make between what is immediately desired and what is regarded as itself valuable, which distinction it is that we accuse Dewey of not making and which seems important in this connection. The distinction that exists between these two may be expressed by saying that while one is apprehended as the liked, the other is apprehended as the ought to be liked. A just act, e.g., presents itself at any one time in deliberation not only as what is immediately desired but also as what ought to be desired. A similar distinction is gained by the fact that what is immediately desired may be of no value, and what is of value, like classical music, may require a great deal of mediation before it is liked. Values proper, then, it would seem, cannot be equated with what is immediately desired, for they distinguish themselves from this by the fact that they appear as what ought to be desired. If this distinction be granted, then it would seem that we must distinguish amongst desires, out of a conflict of which, Dewey tells us, deliberation of the moral type arises - for some of these may be desires for what is merely immediately liked and others for what is not merely liked, but liked because it is apprehended primarily as of moral/

moral value. It is because Dewey thus seems to confuse intrinsic value with what is immediately liked that, while making use of the fact that we immediately apprehend values and desire to realise them, he does not see the necessity for postulating the capacity for an immediate apprehension of values. This confusion between the desired and the valuable seems to be but a consequence of that biological Psychology which we saw was unable to distinguish sufficiently clearly between the moral and the non-moral, and denied wholesale the validity of immediate apprehension, whether of value or of fact.

These two psychological doctrines, then, according to which the ultimate moral attitude which comes to expression in moral valuations is overlooked, and an immediate apprehension of values which seemed to be a fundamental requisite of moral deliberation is denied come to have, as we shall see, a determining influence on his ethical theory. Here it is only necessary to note the influence which these views have on his theory [have on his theory] of moral deliberation. They seem, as we have seen, to prevent Dewey from distinguishing between moral deliberation and prudential deliberation, and consequently, in so far as Dewey is consistent with himself, to make his account of moral deliberation an account of something so wholly on the non-moral level, that it hardly seems possible to regard it as an account of moral deliberation.

2. Moral Ideals.

An important part of Dewey's ethical theory, we noted, was concerned with propounding an "instrumental" view with regard to moral/

moral ideals. This, again, we shall see, rises as the outgrowth of his biological Psychology and his nominalistic Logic.

The two fundamental defects in Dewey's psychology of moral deliberation, we observed, were that he tended to overlook the moral attitude which characterises that deliberation, and that he denied an immediate apprehension of moral values- both of which facts, however, we saw, were ^{nevertheless} assumed and made use of in his account of moral deliberation. We shall see that it is these same two defects in psychology, along with his nominalistic Logic, that underlie also his view regarding moral ideals. This is seen from examining his view regarding the origin of moral ideals.

Moral ideals, ^{so} ~~as~~ Dewey told us, originate from consequences that are liked, liked either because those consequences actually occurred in the past and were found to be liked, or because they are the opposites of consequences that are disliked. In this connection his illustration is ^{not} ~~not~~ ^{to} worthy. He says that just as targets are set up because the consequences of taking aim were liked, so moral ideals are set up because the consequences of aiming at similar kinds of conduct are liked. Leaving aside for the moment the question regarding the failure of such an account to take note of the moral attitude which seems to come to expression in our formation of moral ideals, we may consider now far such a comparison of moral ideals with targets can be regarded as adequate. The point of Dewey's illustration seems to be that the import of moral ideals is the same as that of targets used in shooting. To say this, however, /

ever, is itself to throw doubt on the theory, for the assumption on which the statement is made is that as a matter of fact the import of the two is very different in each case, as indeed it seems to be. If there was in the end no difference in import between them, it will be difficult to show why it is that shooting at targets is regarded as a matter of recreation and amusement, while living according to moral ideals is regarded as one of the greatest concern of life. Dewey sees the difficulty, but seems to think that it is solved by saying that the difference is due to the fact that shooting is not a universal enterprise as morality is,¹ the presumption being that if it were, then targets will be regarded with as much veneration as moral ideals are. The question precisely is, why if aiming at targets and aiming at living according to moral ideals were on the same plane, aiming at targets is not made into a universal enterprise. If it is replied that it is not made into a universal enterprise because it is not universally liked, then, would it not be all the more necessary, as in the case of morality, to use compulsion and persuasion to make people take a liking to shooting at targets? Further, is not the assumption, that the consequences which a moral life leads to are universally liked, belied by the fact that the consequences to which an immoral life leads (from however limited a point of view these consequences are considered) are also universally liked, for if virtue is universal, Vice is at least quite as universal? To put targets on the same level as moral ideals, then, seems to be impossible, for moral ideals do not seem to/

to be constituted merely by consequences that are liked. Something more seems to be necessary for their formation. Once this is seen with regard to tracing moral ideals to consequences in the past that were liked, it is needless to examine Dewey's second point which sees in moral ideals the opposites to consequences in the present which are disliked, for this just as much as the former argument bases its evidence on the merely liked. But lest this should seem too easy a way of getting over the difficulty, we may say that to reduce moral ideals to "fancies of the imagination" "dreams", "castles in the air", is not only quite opposed to ethical thinking, but it is a procedure which, as we shall see, Dewey himself in the end condemns. That it is opposed to ethical thinking is seen from the fact that this thinking distinguishes very clearly between a moral ideal and any fancy that may run across a man's mind, for however much this fancy may represent a consequence which is liked and liked intensely, it may still be an "idle fancy" or the fancy of a "fevered brain", and how are we to distinguish the moral ideal from these? The point is obvious and we are saved the trouble of dilating upon it by the fact that Dewey himself seems to acknowledge it. Thus he says, "Every end that man holds up, every project he entertains is ideal. It marks something wanted, rather than something existing..... It is the work of faith and hope even where it is the plan of the most hard-headed 'practical' man. But though ideal in this sense it is not an ideal. Common sense revolts at calling every project, every design, every contrivance of cunning, ideal,/"

ideal, because common sense includes above all in its conception of the ideal the quality of the plan proposed.¹ Up to this point Dewey seems to agree with common sense, although in what follows this passage he is chiefly concerned with attacking what he calls the "idealistic" view which, in his opinion, exalts this quality till it becomes something "inaccessibly remote" and "transcendental". With this, of course, we are not here concerned, it being sufficient for our purposes that Dewey concedes that moral ideals distinguish themselves from the fancies of the vicious and the designs of the cunning, not in their being any more or any less liked, but in their quality. But this is a concession, which, while speaking much for Dewey's willingness to face facts, would appear to be most inconvenient to his theory; for if this ^{is} true it would seem that the moral ideal is not obtained merely from consequences that are liked, as Dewey has been telling us, but that the quality of what is liked is also important. If this much be granted, then, it would appear, as we shall see, certain implications will at once follow with regard to the moral self which is capable of this achievement, which implications fit rather ill into Dewey's biological Psychology. In the first place, it would appear that the self must be regarded as capable of the moral attitude- a fact that Dewey seems often to overlook, with the result, ~~that~~ as we noted, that he is unable to draw any clear distinction between the moral and the non-moral. In accordance with this general defect of his Psychology, is the fact that Dewey is here unable to distinguish between the liked and the morally desirable/

¹. Human Nature and Conduct, p. 259.

able, or between the liked and the ought to be liked. He traces moral ideals to the liked, but seems to fail to see that if they are thus traceable to the liked, they are traceable to a particular kind of the liked, viz., the liked from the moral point of view. Dewey's biological Psychology, then, ^{which} because of his overlooking the moral attitude is unable to distinguish between the moral and the non-moral, seems to be what is in the end responsible for his tracing moral ideals to the liked. Even more important than this, in the second place, is the fact that if the self is to be capable of arriving at moral ideals, it must be capable of immediately apprehending the ethical quality or value of what is liked. That this must be so, follows from the fact that moral ideals are now regarded as traceable not merely to the liked but to the quality of what is liked. If so, it would appear that this cannot be done, unless this quality was capable of being apprehended by the self; and in order to be capable of being apprehended at all, it would seem that it must be capable of being immediately apprehended, for as we tried to show earlier, mediate apprehension appears to be impossible apart from immediate apprehension. But such immediate apprehension of ethical quality or value is what Dewey repeatedly denies, so that if we are to take this denial seriously- and it seems that we must since it evidently forms a fundamental part of his theory- it would appear that it will be impossible to regard moral ideals as traceable to anything more than the liked, a view which Dewey most uniformly maintains, but which condemns itself by the fact that it is unable to/

to distinguish moral ideals from all the vain imaginings of the idle and the vicious from which Dewey himself, we noticed, wished to distinguish moral ideals.

While saying this, however, we are not unmindful of the fact that it is open to Dewey to say that, on his theory, it is quite possible to distinguish moral ideals from mere fancies of the imagination, in that moral ideals, though in the end traceable to the liked, are traceable to what is most permanently liked. Thus in speaking of moral principles, he says, "Human history is long. There is a long record of past experimentation in conduct, and there are cumulative verifications which give many principles a well-earned prestige."¹ This view when applied to moral ideals appears plausible, but it does not seem to be above criticism, for if the individual is regarded as the one who decides whether a thing is what he permanently likes or not, then many things which he may permanently like, like, e.g., ice-cream, horse-riding and golfing, may have no moral value; but if it is the race that decide whether a thing is permanently liked or not, even then what the race decrees as permanently liked by it, like, e.g., certain meaningless conventions pertaining to dressing and eating, may have no moral value; and in some cases, practices required of the individual by the race, such as head-hunting among the aborigines of Borneo, may be positively evil. It seems impossible, then, to trace moral ideals merely to the liked, even though the latter be qualified to mean/

1. Human Nature and Conduct, p.239.

mean the permanently liked.

Once again, then, we must trace the roots of Dewey's difficulty with regard to moral ideals to his biological Psychology. The overlooking of the moral attitude and the denial of an immediate apprehension of value, which we characterised as the chief defects of that Psychology, seem to prevent him from regarding moral ideals as traceable to anything more than the liked - a view which Dewey himself, as we saw, may be found to condemn.

Further, since immediate apprehension of values is denied, moral ideals are not recognised as referring to values which exist in the items of the real world, but are regarded as artifices invented by us for our purposes. This leads us to examine the nominalism which thus comes to characterise his view regarding moral ideals. That the view follows necessarily from that psychological doctrine of his which denied that immediate apprehension was capable of revealing to us the real, is seen from the fact that once this doctrine is accepted, nominalism would seem to be its logical result. That this must be so follows from the fact that if we are incapable of immediately apprehending, in however imperfect a manner, the moral value of proposed courses of activity, the moral value which we predicate of a particular course of activity cannot, it would seem, be regarded as actually characterising it, but must be viewed as merely ascribed to it by us, since ex hypothesi it is assumed that what is given in such immediate apprehension is not what is characteristic of the real world. If this be so, then moral ideals/

ideals, which, as Dewey himself tells us, appear, not as the revelations of "an original faculty of illumination which ... shines upon moral truths and objects and reveals them without effort for precisely what they are"¹, but as generalisations from past experience of what is immediately liked or disliked,² cannot, it seems certain, be regarded as referring to constitutive features of the real world; for what is a generalisation from the liked, while capable of being regarded as revealing to us the nature of the self which in it comes to expression, can hardly be regarded as revealing to us the nature of the objective world of things and persons. Dewey's nominalistic theory with regard to moral ideals therefore would seem to be directly traceable to that tenet of his biological Psychology which denies an immediate apprehension of value and which we have already examined and found unacceptable.

If moral ideals are not to be regarded as referring to elements constitutive of the real world, and if it be asked how in the case moral ideals come to be formed at all, the only available answer is the one that seems to be implied in his account of moral ideals,² viz., that it was convenient to abstract the elements in experience which were liked and to classify them under a few main headings so that they may aid us in future situations which require reconstruction. Stated thus, Dewey's theory ^{of moral ideals} is seen to be but an application to the realm of Ethics of that nominalism which we have already stated and criticised in his Logic. Substantially, therefore, /

1. Human Nature and Conduct, p. 187.

2. cp. " " " " p. 225.

therefore, the criticisms there urged will be applicable here, and we are on that account saved the trouble of entering into an examination of the general assumptions on which the theory is based. But taking the doctrine as it appears in his Ethics, we may point out that Dewey's view that moral ideals, like all universals, are inventions manufactured by us for our purposes, while as we saw ultimately based on his biological Psychology, seems also to be necessitated by his assumption that the process whereby we arrive at moral ideals ~~so~~ wholly distorts what is originally given in experience that it is concluded that what is arrived at in this manner cannot be true of the real world. Thus he tells us in this connection, "Men like some of the consequences and dislike other. Henceforth... attaining or averting similar consequences are aims or ends. These consequences constitute the meaning and value of an activity as it comes under deliberation. Meantime of course imagination is busy. Old consequences are enhanced, recombined, modified in imagination. Invention operates"¹.

While this seems to be in the end but the application to his Ethics of that view which we discussed in his Logic, which regarded abstraction as mutilating the real, it appears to arise in his Ethics out of a confounding of moral ideals with fancies of the imagination, which also he describes under the term, ideal.² Such fancies, it may be granted, are inventions and are obtained by enhancing, recombining and modifying in imagination the things that are found in experience as/

1. Human Nature & Conduct, p. 225.

2. cp. Reconstruction in Phil. p. 104f.

as is clearly evidenced by the forming of utopias and all the fables and myths in which literature abounds. But the reason for regarding these as inventions seems to be, not that they imply much art for their formation, (for many concepts, e.g., the concept of a volcano in eruption, may require for their formation much imagination and art on the part of one who has never experienced the objects to which they refer, and yet these concepts not be fictions of the imagination but refer to things in the real world), but that the world as we know it does not seem to warrant their objective reality, while moral ideals seem clearly to distinguish themselves from these in that the real world seems to abound in particulars in which these ideals are found realised. Thus a unicorn is an invention of the imagination because the animal thus referred to ^{does not as such} actually exist in the real world; but justice surely cannot be regarded as thus an invention, for it seems to be an actual characteristic of elements in the real world. It characterises e.g., all just acts^s, all just persons and all just institutions. To put moral ideals, then, on a level with fancies of the imagination seems to be unwarranted. At any rate, it would appear that moral ideals cannot be regarded as inventions merely because the fancies of the imagination are inventions or because ^{they involve} the work of imagination and abstraction, for neither of these, as such, seem as we have been trying to show, to be capable of proving them to be inventions. To regard them as inventions, it would seem necessary over and above this to show that they do not refer to elements in the real world, but/

but this Dewey seems nowhere in his Ethics to ^{do} _^ He merely assumes it, and perhaps rightly assumes it, for his Ethics is, as he himself tells us, but the application to the realm of morals of his Experimental Logic. ¹ But since we have already discussed the view as it is sought to be maintained in his Logic, the arguments which we urged in that connection should be regarded as of sufficient weight to throw discredit on the view which regards moral ideals as inventions.

Nowhere does the effect of Dewey's nominalistic view with regard to moral ideals come to as great a prominence as it does in his account ~~in~~ of the function of moral ideals. Thus we were told in this connection that the function of moral ideals in conduct was the same as that of targets in shooting. ~~in~~ Even more striking is the comparison of the function of moral ideals in conduct with the function of stars in sailing. Thus "A mariner does not sail towards the stars, but by noting the stars he is aided in conducting his present activity of sailing. A port or harbour is his objective..." ² The analogy is meant to show that moral ideals guide activity only in the sense that stars guide sailing, i.e., that moral ideals are not to be regarded as "ends" or "goals" at which action is, or ought to be, directed, any more than stars are goals at reaching which sailing is directed, but that they are to be regarded as useful devices by which we carry on what is to be done, in each ^{unique} situation as it occurs, more effectively than is possible/

• cp. Reconstruction in Philosophy, pp.160&165.
 • Human Nature and Conduct, p.226.

possible without their aid. Thus justice, benevolence and truth are not, Dewey will tell us, values which the moral man seeks to realise in his conduct, but are classifications which provide him with the main heads by reference to which he may consider his bearings in each situation requiring reconstruction as it comes before him in deliberation. Thus arises the view that the import of moral ideals is intellectual, not imperative. To show that it arises in this manner is to reveal its chief defect, viz., that nominalistic attitude with regard to moral ideals which we have already criticised. It is because it is thought, e.g., that justice is not a characteristic of elements in the real world, that it is regarded as not realisable in conduct, but is considered to be something as remote from a particular course of action which is guided by it, as a star is from the activity that is guided by it. Once this nominalism is denied- and we have found reasons for rejecting it in our section on Dewey's Logic- it seems doubtful if moral ideals can still be regarded in this manner, i.e., if they can still be regarded as merely intellectual and as having no real imperative authority. This is the question to which we must now turn.

In our exposition we noted that the reason that Dewey gave for refusing to regard moral ideals as imperatives was that to regard them so is to set them up as fixed and final and as demanding action as ~~a~~ means to themselves; and this, Dewey considered, was to lead to hypocrisy in the moral life and to an avoidance of a careful/

careful scrutiny of the many consequences that flow from each act. If, to regard moral ideals as imperatives is necessarily to be committed to this consequence, then, we must agree with Dewey that moral ideals are not imperatives. But it is difficult to see why it should be thought that to regard moral ideals as imperatives is necessarily to be committed to thinking of them as dictating to us what exactly is to be done in a particular situation, for it is against such a view that Dewey's criticism seems to be urged. As against this, it is only necessary to point to common everyday thinking on the matter, which regards justice, for example, as something that ought to be done "though the heavens fall", but which at the same time may be divided against itself as to what justice demands in a particular situation, say, e.g., with regard to property, as to a just distribution of which there may hardly exist any unanimity of opinion. Uncertainty, then, with regard to what a moral ideal demands in a particular situation does not seem to disparage its imperativeness, and yet Dewey's criticism seems to imply that it does- a view, however, which he seeks nowhere, so far as I know, to prove. This same point of view seems to ^{come to} expression in his repeated condemnation of regarding moral valuation as a process of subsumption, where an act is regarded as morally evaluated when it is brought simply under a general rule. It is against such a theory that Dewey's criticism is directed, and rightly directed, for moral valuation of the fully reflective type does not, even as Dewey tells us, ^{appear} to be so simple. But/

But it hardly seems necessary to remark that to regard moral ideals as imperatives is not to be forced to regard moral valuation as a process of subsumption. Dewey's view here, as well as in his criticism stated above, seems to be due to a failure to note the formal character of moral ideals. We have already noted that the moral ideal may be regarded as an imperative which demands absolute allegiance, and yet the one who so regards it be left in doubt as to what exactly the ideal demands in any particular situation. This seems to be so because the ideal appears to be as such abstract and formal and to gain content and specific meaning only in terms of the concrete situation in which it is sought to be, or is found, realised. This is confirmed by the rich variety of cases in which benevolence, e.g., is found realised, and the almost endless variety of outer act in which the self-same "spirit of benevolence" expresses itself. Thus allegiance to benevolence may lead a savage to drink the blood of the totem animal, and thus to pledge his life to his tribe, i. e., to pledge to kill members of all other tribes; while allegiance to the same ideal of benevolence may lead a saint to lay down his life for the members of a hostile tribe. The act of slaying those who do not belong to one's own tribe and the act of offering one's life for members of a hostile tribe may seem quite opposed to each other, but so long as these acts are prompted by motives of benevolence, the element of value common to them both would seem to be the same, viz., the ideal of benevolence which they both exemplify, each in its own way. When moral/

moral ideals are thus seen to be capable of being realised in an almost endless variety of forms, we not only come to see their formal character, but also to be made aware of their permanence. They seem now to present themselves as the values which the human race at all times and in every place has invariably recognised, and which each age and generation has sought to realise according to its own growth in "spiritual discernment"- a view which seems to show in an unfavourable light Dewey's theory of an ever-changing flux of "individualised goods and ends" which come and go as circumstances alter. Be this as it may, it would seem that if moral ideals must be regarded as thus formal in character and if as we have seen, in common opinion, they are not only regarded as formal in character, but are in addition held to be imperative in import, Dewey must produce further evidence to show wherein common opinion is wrong in thinking of moral ideals as imperatives. But beyond the objection which we have just considered, viz., that to regard moral ideals as imperatives is to regard them as specifically laying down what exactly is to be done in a particular situation, Dewey gives no other, his opinion in the matter being apparently but the result of his nominalism, which we have already criticised and which seems to lead him to hold that moral ideals are not realisable in the particular^as of conduct. Once this nominalism is denied, then, it would seem that moral ideals cannot be regarded as merely artificial devices forged out of particulars to serve as "intellectual tools" in the work of adapting ourselves to unique situations, but must rather/

rather be regarded as the universals which are, or may be, realised in conduct. Further when these universals are found in common thinking to be looked upon as having imperative authority, they come to appear as the values which the moral individual seeks to realise in his own life, and in the life of the society in which he lives, for such imperative claim on the individual's allegiance to themselves seems to be what is most characteristic of all values rightly so-called.

Dewey's theory of Moral Ideals, seems, we may then conclude to be the result of various doctrines which appear to be unacceptable - the foremost among these being his nominalism which seems to prevent him from seeing that moral ideals not merely guide conduct but are realisable in conduct, and his biological psychology which by its denial of an immediate apprehension of value appears necessarily to lead to this nominalism, and by its overlooking of the ultimate moral attitude that seems to underlie the formation of all moral ideals, seems unable to distinguish moral ideals from fancies of the imagination and dreams of what is liked. Ultimately, then, the entire view would seem to be the result of Dewey's "behaviourist" Psychology, for the nominalism which characterises it appears itself, as we have seen, to be but the logical outcome of his psychology, the rest being, as also we have seen, directly derived from this psychology.

3. The Criterion in Moral Deliberation.

In our exposition, we noted that Dewey vehemently protested against the idea of the Summum Bonum, the reasons given being, in the/

the first place, that to postulate a Summum Bonum was to enter into a "Bog of disputes that cannot be settled", and in the second place, that it was to lead to a "hard and narrow rigidity" in the moral life. The first reason does not seem to require much consideration, it being doubtful if Dewey himself will lay much weight on it, since obviously in Philosophy we are not concerned with avoiding controversies for the sake of avoiding them, nor are we allowed to dispense away with a problem by saying that it cannot be solved. We have already dealt with the second reason insofar as we have tried to show that universals are formal in character. Dewey's objection, that to postulate a Summum Bonum is to lead to narrowness and rigidity in the moral life, will seem to hold only if the Summum Bonum were regarded as telling us what exactly is to be done in a particular situation. But this, it does not seem at all necessary to maintain, it being quite possible to hold that the Summum Bonum exists and that it is formal in character. If so, we must enquire if there is not still a further and a much more fundamental reason which leads Dewey to deny the idea of the Summum Bonum. This is not far to seek, since it appears on the surface in his writings, viz. that nominalistic attitude with regard to universals to which we have repeatedly referred. His view that universals are inventions which have no existence in the particular items of reality naturally goes with the view that each such particular item is absolutely unique and "non-reduplicable" and in line with this is his opinion in Ethics that each moral situation/

situation as it occurs is unique, with its correspondingly unique good. Thus Dewey tells us, "In quality, the good is never twice itself, it never copies itself, it is new every morning, fresh every evening. It is unique in its every presentation. For it marks the resolution of a distinctive complication of competing habits and impulses which can never repeat itself".¹ If each situation has thus its own unique good then it would seem that Dewey is right in ^{con-}cluding that the Summum Bonum is impossible and meaningless, for the very idea of a Summum Bonum when rightly interpreted would seem to imply that though the good of each situation is particular, it is not particular in the sense of excluding everything which is universal, but that there is a common element which prevades all these particular goods and makes them appear as the individuations of the one ultimate Good. But on Dewey's hypothesis of the absolutely unique particular, this would seem to be quite impossible. Hence his doctrine of "endless ends"² and of a "plurality of changing, moving, individualised goods and ends",³ "for ever coming into existence as new activities occasion new consequences"². When Dewey's nominalism is removed, then, it would seem that the bottom is removed from his objections against the Summum Bonum. Further, when it is remembered that Dewey himself, in spite of his protests against the idea of a Summum Bonum, did in the end formulate an ultimate criterion of moral deliberation, it would appear that the quest after such an ultimate criterion is inevitable in ethical theory. To a discussion of this criterion

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1. Human Nature & Conduct p. 211; and cp. Reconstruction in Phil. pp. 163-9
2. " " " p. 232
3. Reconstruction in Phil. p. 162

we must now turn.

The criterion we found to be what Dewey called the "continuous reconstruction of ^{experience} ~~its periods~~" or the maintaining of an equilibrium among incompatible tendencies in each changing, moving situation as it occurs. The biological, non-moral psychology that underlies this criterion we have already discussed. By way of recapitulation, we may note that this psychology overlooked the moral attitude which comes to expression in moral valuation and denied an immediate apprehension of value, with the result that it became impossible for it to distinguish moral deliberation ^{from} ~~and~~ prudential deliberation, moral deliberation coming to ~~be~~ regarded as ^{but} the carrying to greater thoroughness of the processes involved in prudential deliberation. In line with this appears to be Dewey's criterion which seems, as we have seen, to be borrowed directly from an analysis from what is observed to take place in a non-moral situation requiring deliberation before action can be entered upon - a procedure, natural enough when the distinction between the moral and the non-moral is abolished. To see Dewey's criterion in the light of his ^{then} psychology is to understand it, and we seem justified once more in looking upon his "behaviorist" psychology as what is responsible in the end for his ~~v~~iew in ethics. Apart from this psychology, which we have already discussed, we may now consider his criterion to see how far it, when taken by itself, can be regarded as adequate.

If this criterion is understood as telling us what is actually/

actually aimed at in moral conduct, and if by equilibrium is meant equilibrium in action, then it would seem that not much argument is needed to throw doubt on its validity, for it is evident that the actual aim in moral conduct is not to attain equilibrium or harmony in action, as is not only amply borne witness to by the fact that moral conduct often produces the greatest discord in action and is persisted in in spite of such discord and conflict, but also by the fact that to aim at equilibrium and harmony is often regarded as the height of selfishness and cowardice. Thus in a world where a Pilate is branded as immoral for seeking to find harmony in action by pleasing an angry mob, and a Jesus is ^λdefied into immortal goodness for refusing to yield to any harmony except the harmony with the "will of God", even though this meant the greatest possible discord at the time leading ultimately to death, it seems that if Dewey's criterion is to be interpreted as providing the aim in moral action, it is flagrantly contradicted.

In saying this however we are not to be understood to assert that Dewey is not aware of such a common-place fact but that his criterion when linked with some of the main tenets of his philosophy lends itself very easily to this interpretation. Thus when "doing", "activity", "adaption to environment" is made the basic category¹ and thinking is regarded as what is entered upon at moments when activity is disturbed for the purpose of finding a course of action which will most satisfactorily dispose of this disturbance and allow action to go on its way free and unimpeded/

unimpeded,¹ the aim of all thinking would appear to be "reconstruction", i.e. the discovery of a course of action which will lead to the greatest possible poise and harmony in action, for the on-flow of activity is on this hypothesis the main concern, ~~th~~ discord in action being on that account the greatest malady. If this, then, be the aim of all thinking and since moral thinking differs from this, in Dewey's opinion, only in the greater thoroughness ^{with which} it does its work, such ~~a~~ removal of discord and such discovery of harmony in action would seem to be indeed the aim of moral thinking as well. If so it would appear to lay itself open at once to the criticism above urged.

But it is quite possible for Dewey to escape this criticism and to assert that it is not harmonised action, in the sense of a smooth, undisturbed course of action, that we aim at in moral conduct, but that the action we aim at is one which will harmonise and unify all the tendencies clamouring for expression in any particular ^{situation} ~~action~~, whether this action is fortunate enough to have a smooth course or not². In interpreting his criterion in this sense, we seem to pass from the merely biological point of view to a deeper psychological ^{ula} ~~formation~~ which interprets the conflict to be overcome as an inner conflict of motives. Witness, e.g. his statement "Choice is reasonable when/

1. cp. His statement, "We are striving to unify our responses, to achieve a consistent environment which will restore unity of conduct". (Human Nature & Conduct, p. 183: Reconstruction in Phil. pp. 139 & 9)
2. cp. Human Nature & Conduct p. 293. "As long as any social impulse endures, so long an activity that shuts itself off will bring inward dissatisfaction and entail a struggle for compensatory goods, no matter what pleasures or external successes acclaim its course".

when it induces us to act reasonably; that is with regard to the claims of each of the competing habits and impulses".¹

On this interpretation it might be argued that Pilate did not really secure harmony, for though the harmony secured was outwardly so, inwardly it was far from harmony, for the tendency to justice was suppressed; and harmony, so it might be said, is not one where discordant elements are suppressed, but one in which they are retained and made to work together for a common end.¹ Stated thus, we seem to come upon Dewey's criterion in its most plausible form. Thus it will be remembered that Dewey distinguished between reasonable and unreasonable choice ~~the~~ by saying that while the object thought of in unreasonable choice "overrides all competitor and secures for itself the sole right of way", the object thought of in reasonable choice is one "which stimulates by unifying, harmonising, different competing tendencies", i.e., by releasing "an activity in which all are fulfilled, not indeed, in their original form but in a 'sublimated' fashion."² The distinction between the morally good act and the morally bad act would seem to be on this hypothesis based on the amounts of sublimation that is instituted in each case of all the tendencies of the self which are seeking expression at any one time. When thus stated, it is seen that Dewey's criterion bases itself on the assumption that while the good acts sublimate most, if not all, of the tendencies³ of the self ~~where it~~ is in conflict at any one time, the bad act suppresses most, if not all, of them. The entire issue then with

regard/
Human Nature & Conduct pp.194&5
" " " pp.193&4

The ambiguity of this expression will be made evident in the course of our argument.

regard to the validity or invalidity of Dewey's criterion would seem in the last analysis to centre round this point.

Before we can consider this, we must point out the light-heartedness with which this criterion seems to assume that the tendency^{ies} which underlie our preferences in any particular situation are discoverable. Thus he speaks of the reasonable choice as one^{which} stimulates by harmonising "competing tendencies, apparently implying that each line of action which we desire has a tendency corresponding to it, ~~and~~ which instead of expressing itself in the particular form in which it presents itself may be sublimated to another end and thus find its fulfillment. Accordingly it ~~must~~^{might} be said that the incompatible lines of action with which Pilate was faced in his judgment on Jesus, were either to condemn Jesus or to acquit Him, and that the corresponding tendencies^{ies} in conflict were the desire to please the people and the desire to do justice, and that the desire to please the people could have been sublimated to the doing of justice had Pilate only not allowed the former to fulfil itself in the form of pleasing the people by arresting Jesus but in the form of pleasing people by doing justice in the face of all odds - an act which the people in the end would in all probability have come to admire. While this seems very plausible, its plausibility appears to be gained by artificially simplifying the problem till it becomes untrue to life; for, the desires which underlie our preference for any particular line of action do not seem to be so few ~~or~~ so simple as Dewey's criterion seems to imply, nor so capable of being completely analysed. The/

The desire to please the people, e.g., in the case of Pilate, may itself have been but the expression of numerous other desires, all combining together to express themselves in this particular form. Thus it may express the desire to regain the lost confidence of the people, to please a particular political party, to ensure personal safety and the safety of family and friends, to gain a higher office in the Roman Government by successfully averting a riot and so on almost endlessly and in innumerable combinations. Similarly the desire to do the just act may in its turn have been prompted by various desires running into each other to form one complex whole. For example it may have been prompted by a desire to put an end to his wife's superstitious fears and pleadings, to maintain the reputation of the Government for justice and fair play, to do justice for justice' sake, to make a good impression on a friend whom he loves and respects, to stifle a creeping fear of what may happen to him in the life after death and so on. Thus the two conflicting desires seem on analysis to break up into a whole host of desires, all seeking expression through this means; and these again, may be found to break up into numerous others, and these in their turn into others and so on indefinitely, till the whole self seems to be involved in each line of action that is preferred.¹ If so, does it not seem that by basing the distinction between the morally good act and/

cf. Stout's statement, "... the recognised reasons for a decision can never constitute the entire cause of decision. Behind them there always lies the Self as a whole, and what this involves can never be completely analysed or stated in the form of definite reasons or special motives. (Manual of Psychology, 3rd Edit. p. 709.)

and the morally bad act on the amount of sublimation, that is instituted of "competing tendencies", ~~as~~ Dewey's criterion has shifted the problem to a realm where silence would seem to be most consonant with wisdom? for, how are we to know what tendencies exactly underlay our preference for a particular line of action, and even if we did know this, how are we to know that the line of action chosen by us sublimated more of the "competing tendencies" than any of the preferences with which it came into conflict? For, in order to know this, it would seem that we should know not only what tendencies underlay each of our preferences and which of these were sublimated and which suppressed by ~~out~~ action, but also what ~~tendencies~~ would have been sublimated or suppressed had any of the other preferences been chosen, and which of these preferences would have fulfilled most of these tendencies - a matter which in its complexity would seem to be beyond human power.

To Dewey however in line with his naturalistic psychology, the matter appears to be much more simple. Each complex preference seems to him to be reducible to some one simple tendency, and when thus reduced to be sufficiently accounted for. Whether this view is necessarily connected or not with the very inadequate account, which we found was given in his psychology, of the self as merely the "bearer of experience" rather than as the active principle in all experience, still, it would seem to be a view which fails to see that each of our preferences turns out on analysis to involve the whole self and to be as complex as the self itself. If this be so, then, the ambiguity of speaking ^{of} "competing tendencies" without/

specifying what exactly is to be understood by this term becomes apparent, for it would seem to be capable of referring to any of an almost indefinite number of desires into which our outstanding preferences in a particular situation are analysable. Overlooking for the moment difficulties such as these which one might find in regard to Dewey's criterion, we must next enquire into the validity of the assumption on which Dewey's criterion seems to be based, viz. that while the morally good act sublimates, if not all, of the tendencies seeking expression in any particular situation, the morally bad act suppresses most, if not all, of them. Understanding by competing tendencies the outstanding desires which force themselves on the agent's consideration in a particular situation- for this seems to be the most natural interpretation of the term, and one therefore which perhaps Dewey himself intended- it would seem that if Dewey's criterion is to serve, it must mean that in a particular situation where there are only two such outstanding conflicting desires, the good act will be one which sublimates the conflicting desire and the bad act, one which suppresses it. We must enquire if this is always the case, for if it is not always the case, it would hardly seem entitled to be regarded as providing the ultimate distinction between the morally good and the morally bad act. Thus a man may be well aware in a particular situation that if he is to save his friend's life, he can do it only at the cost of his own. The ^{tendencies} painfully in conflict in such a situation would seem to be love for his friend and love for his own life. He may without much hesitation decide to give his life for his friend. Is it possible in this case to say that his love for his own life was sublimated to, and/

and found its fulfillment in, the love for his friend? Does it not much rather seem as though it were suppressed for the sake of his friend? If so, how is it possible on Dewey's hypothesis to account for the moral goodness which we undoubtedly predicate of such an act? Further, if the agent in question had stopped to consider the matter, he might have found other desires rising up and claiming a hearing, e.g., desire for the welfare of his family on whom he might feel that his death will have ill effects; whereas the conflicting desire may present itself as just what it is, viz., to save his friend from death purely because he is his friend. In this case, it would seem that if he decided to preserve his own life more "tendencies" would have been sublimated or fulfilled by means of it than if he died for his friend in which case only this one desire to save his friend from death is fulfilled. In an instance of this kind, then, we seem to have evidence which appears to invalidate Dewey's assumption that while the morally good act sublimates most, if not all, of the "tendencies" in conflict in a particular situation, the morally bad act suppresses most, if not all, of them; for here we seem to have an act which in spite of suppressing all conflicting "tendencies", even to the extent of putting an end to the agent himself, is regarded as of great moral value, while an act which fulfills more of the "tendencies" in conflict in the same situation is regarded as of much less moral value. It would seem, then, that if by "tendencies" is meant the outstanding desires in a moral situation, the morally good act cannot be defined as the one which sublimates most of these desires, nor/

the morally bad act as the one which suppresses most of them.

Moreover, the subjectivism, which the theory when thus interpreted seems to involve, would appear to present it in a definitely unfavourable light; for if Dewey's criterion is to be interpreted to assert that what is morally good in a particular situation is that line of action which will fulfil most of the desires which are seeking expression in that situation, then, the moral good will seem to differ from individual to individual and for the same individual at different times, according as these desires and their number vary. On this hypothesis, what is morally good for the saint will not be morally good for the sinner, for while the former may, in a particular situation, have mostly desires for the good, which are easily fulfilled in the good act, the latter may, in the same situation, have mostly desires for the bad, all of which will have to remain unfulfilled if the sinner tries to do as the saint, thus making the act, however good for the saint, morally bad when done by the sinner.

If, however, by "tendencies" is not meant such outstanding desires but the capacities of the self in the way of habits and impulses (to use Dewey's classification) which underlie these desires, then, since what these are in any particular situation appears, as we have seen, to be next to ~~be~~ impossible exactly to judge, we may enquire if, when taken in the large, it is true that if what is morally good is capable of sublimating, harmonising and unifying the various habits and impulses of the self, what is morally evil is/

is not capable of doing the same. On analysis it seems indeed to appear that the morally evil is as capable of sublimating the various habits and impulses of the self to itself as the morally good. Thus if to be a saint all the habits and impulses of the self must be sublimated to the one end of living for the highest values, to be an effective miser seems to require equally that all the habits and impulses of the self must be sublimated to the one ~~end~~ end of hoarding up money. If it is replied that in the case of the miser, all the "tendencies" of the self except the one of hoarding up money are suppressed, it is not only difficult to see how that distinguishes in moral value the miser from the saint, for in a similar sense it may be held that the saint has suppressed all his "tendencies" except the one of giving himself unreservedly to the call of the Good, but also that to speak of the miser as having suppressed all his habits and impulses except the one of hoarding up money seems, when properly understood, not to be true; for it appears that unless his capacities, i.e., his impulses, instincts, emotions and sentiments, were enlisted in the service of this one end of hoarding up money, his impulse to hoard up money will be left powerless and ineffective. The very fact, on the contrary, that the one end of the miser has such an all-compelling control over him, would seem to show that his ^{whole} self has been enlisted in its service, i.e., that all his capacities have been ~~pp~~ordinated by, and find their fulfilment/

cp. his statement, "Our moral measure for estimating any existing arrangement or any proposed reform is its effect upon impulse and habits. Does it liberate or suppress, ossify or render flexible, divide or unify interest?" Human Nature and Conduct, pp.293&4.

fulfilment in a sublimated fashion (to use Dewey's expression) in the service of, this one end. If so, does it not seem that, even when "tendencies" are interpreted as the capacities of the self, in the sense of habits and impulses, that underlie our active life, Dewey's criterion fails to serve, for if what is morally good seems to be capable of sublimating them, what is morally evil seems also to be capable of doing the same?

Whatever interpretation we put on the term, "tendencies", then, it appears that the morally good as well as the morally bad seem alike capable of sublimating or suppressing them, so that to make sublimation the criterion of moral goodness seems hardly possible. Or, to put it in the words of the proposition with which we started, the maintaining of an equilibrium among all the tendencies clamouring for expression in each changing, moving situation, as it occurs, seems incapable of being regarded as what in the end distinguishes the morally good act from the morally bad act; for if what is morally good is capable of maintaining such an equilibrium, what is morally bad seems capable of doing the same; Dewey's view here being but the result of his avowed naturalistic psychology, which, as we saw, tended to regard highly complex preferences as reducible to some simple impulse, and when thus reduced as fully accounted for, i.e., for example, to regard the miser's preference for money as reducible to one simple impulse, and to overlook the fact that, far from the rest of his impulses being suppressed, they seem to be coordinated by and sublimated to this one preference.

Whether, then, equilibrium be interpreted in the sense of harmony/

harmony in action, or whether it be interpreted in the sense of sublimation and coordination of all the tendencies of the self in conflict, at any one time, or in the life of the self when taken as a whole, it seems in the end to fail to serve as the criterion of moral goodness.

Turning next to the two formulae, which Dewey gives, of the Moral Good, the close relation of which formulae to his criterion we note in our exposition, it would seem that if the above conclusion with regard to Dewey's criterion is granted, the claim of these formulae to validity will be considerably weakened. We may now consider these formulae to see how far they are capable of serving as adequate formulations of the Moral Good.

One of these, we noted, regarded growth of conduct in meaning as the Moral Good, and progress as consisting in the "complication and extension of the significance found within experience". Whether these suffice to define the Moral Good is what we must enquire. It may be granted at the very outset that the higher the moral development, the greater appears to be the capacity of the individual to perceive moral distinctions which seem entirely above the capacity of the savage and the morally undeveloped to make. Thus a savage may without feeling perform certain acts which, owing to the finer sensitiveness of the morally developed individual to the various consequences which those acts involve and their moral value, would appear to the latter gruesome and definitely evil. It is on this undeniable truth that Dewey's theory seems to base itself. But the question arises whether growth of conduct/

conduct in meaning can itself be counted as morally good, for this is what would seem to be implied, when it is put forward as the Moral Ideal.

If greater capacity for perceiving the meaning of our acts is what is characteristic of the morally developed individual it appears that that capacity is found also to characterise individuals who are far from moral. The "shrewd ^{cold} hard intellect" of the "realistic man of the world", of whom Dewey often speaks, is a good example. This man, it would appear, knows the meaning of what he is about and employs, to great advantage, this meaning in action, and when morals itself is defined by Dewey as "learning the meaning of what we are about and employing that meaning in action"¹, it would seem that very little is left to distinguish the moral man from such clever schemers as Dewey himself condemns. If it is replied that the shrewd business man does not see the full meaning of his action in that he overlooks the moral aspect of his action, or if he does it, he does not employ it in his action, does it not seem that the moral man also overlooks many aspects of his action or if he does see them does not employ them in his action? The generous-hearted man, e.g., fails to see the meaning that Ebenezer Scrooge sees in giving his clerk a day off on Christmas Day with pay. To Scrooge such action is unfair; it is, he tells us, allowing ^{the} ~~his~~ clerk to pickpocket his employer once a year. To the ordinary moral man such meaning may not suggest itself at all, and even if it did/

did suggest itself, it may not be employed in action, and yet the ordinary moral man would be considered as more moral in this regard than Scrooge. Does it not seem, then, that if the shrewd business man overlooks or fails to employ the full meaning of his action, the moral man also does the same, and that if increase of meaning can be found to ~~be~~^{lead} to the morally good, it can also lead to the morally bad? How then are we to regard growth of conduct in meaning as itself morally good, much less as the Moral Ideal? Dewey's view here, no doubt, is due to the assumption that the morally bad act suppresses all conflicting tendencies so that the meaning of the bad act comes to be regarded by him as reduced to a single all-absorbing point, while the morally good act sub¹limates these tendencies, so that the good act comes to be regarded by him as capable of a wealth and variety of meaning, which is impossible for the bad act; but this assumption we have already examined and found unwarranted.

Once growth of conduct in meaning is found incapable of serving as the Moral Ideal, it would seem to follow as a matter of course that progress or moral development cannot be regarded, as it is by Dewey, as consisting in a complication and extension of the significance found within experience; for this view, it seems hardly necessary to remark, appears as a matter of fact to depend for support on the view which we have just criticised that growth of conduct in meaning is what constitutes the Moral Ideal. The objections raised in that connection/

connection will therefore apply equally well here, and progress or moral development be seen to consist in more than "complication and extension of the significance found within experience"; for if such complication and extension is capable of leading to the morally good or to moral development, it seems also capable of leading to the morally evil or to moral degradation. Dewey's attempt therefore to ^{define} ~~define~~ Moral Good in terms of "increase of meaning" must, it would seem, be pronounced a failure.

We have still to examine the alternative formulation, which Dewey offers us, of the Moral Good, to see how far it can be regarded as adequate. This formulation, it will be remembered, regarded the all-round growth of individuals or the full development of their capacities as the Moral Good. Such a view appears at first sight very plausible; but on closer inspection it seems to bristle with difficulties because of a failure on Dewey's part to make clear what exactly the terms of his formula are to mean. Thus when the Ideal is said to be the full development of the capacities of individuals, it is difficult, in the absence of any guidance from Dewey, to know what exactly terms such as "capacities" and "full development" are meant to signify. Capacities, e.g., would seem to be meaningless apart from the ends in relation to which they are regarded as capacities - a view which Dewey himself may be found to advocate.¹ If capacities are thus meaningless apart from the ends at realising which they are directed, it would/

1. cp. Human Nature & Conduct pp. 89-124.

would seem to follow of necessity that merely to speak of capacities, as Dewey does in his formulation of the Moral Good without saying capacities for what, is to say something void of any definite meaning; much more, then, void of any moral significance; for if these "capacities" are capable of being developed to achieve what is morally good, they seem quite as capable of being developed to achieve what is morally evil.

Similarly with regard to "full development" no indication seems to be forthcoming from Dewey as to what exactly this is to mean, since no criterion is suggested by him as to what the development of these capacities consists in.

When we turn to his alternative description of the Ideal as all-round growth, we do not seem to get very much further in gaining a clearer grasp of Dewey's meaning. On the other hand, we seem to have the additional difficulty of knowing what exactly the term "all-round" is to mean. Is it for example to mean an equal development of every "capacity" or is it to mean the development of "capacities" in their right proportion? If the former, it is difficult to see what meaning equality can have in view of the qualitative diversity of ends in relation to which capacities have meaning. For example, how much development of the capacity for friendship shall be regarded as ^{valent} ~~equivalent~~ to how much development of the capacity for mathematics? If the latter interpretation is meant, then questions arise as to what is to be the criterion by which "right proportion" is to be determined. To such questions/

questions again Dewey seems to give no answer, except perhaps the very formal and negative answer which is obtainable from his moral criterion, viz., that these capacities are to be developed in such a proportion that the development of one does not conflict with the development of any of the others. What meaning this extremely abstract statement can have in any particular situation, it is difficult to say.

Thus whatever interpretation we put on Dewey's Ideal of full development of capacity or all-round growth of individuals, we seem to be faced alike with ambiguity and lack of any very definite meaning. This is not surprising, since the one basic problem of ethical theory seems to be that regarding the moral criterion, the various formulations of the Moral Good being but superstructures built on it and therefore standing or falling with it. It is perhaps for this reason that Dewey does not concern himself with stating at length or to be free from ambiguity, the various forms in which on his theory the Moral Good may be expressed, the more important question - and perhaps the only important question - being that regarding the moral criterion which we have already stated and discussed, and to which we must revert for our final criticism.

This criterion, it will be remembered, laid down that a line of action is morally good when it sublimates or fulfils ~~must~~, if not all of the elements in conflict in a situation brought about by incompatible desires. All that a generalisation from/

^{this}
 from [^] can rightly lead us to would seem to be that the Moral Ideal is the realisation of a unified and well co-ordinated selfhood, which maintains its unity and co-ordination through all the changing, moving situations in which the agent finds himself in the process of living his life. But this, we have already seen, can be an accurate description of the selfhood attained by the miser as well as by the saint; for both of them alike seemed able to realise a well co-ordinated selfhood, insofar as they made the pursuit of their respective ends the one permanent and consistent aim of their lives, so that to regard the realisation of a unified and well co-ordinated selfhood as the Moral Ideal seems hardly possible - at any rate, it would seem to be incapable of providing the necessary distinction between the moral good and bad, and therefore fail to serve as the one Supreme Good of which we are in search in Ethics.

Whether, then, we adopt the biological point of view and regard successful overcoming of conflict in our physical and social environment as the Moral Ideal, or whether we widen and deepen this point of view, till the conflict to be overcome comes to be regarded as an inner conflict of motives, and Moral Ideal as the attainment of a unified and well co-ordinated selfhood, which maintains its unity and co-ordination through all the changing situations in which the agent finds himself, in the end, it appears that neither view is capable of providing us with an adequate criterion of moral goodness.

In conclusion, we may point out that the factors, which contribute/

contribute to make Dewey's theory inadequate, seem in the last analysis to be traceable to the two fundamental defects in his Psychology to which we have referred throughout our discussion. 1) His desire to view man wholly on the biological level leads him to overlook, or at least to fail to take account of, the ultimate moral attitude which seems to characterise human consciousness: consequently no clear distinction is made by him between the moral and the non-moral, with the result that his criterion of moral deliberation comes admittedly to be derived by him from an analysis of non-moral prudential deliberation, and with the result that on examination his criterion fails to give us any means of distinguishing the moral from the non-moral, much less, of distinguishing the moral from the immoral. 2) Not only does Dewey's biological Psychology thus fail to take account of the ultimate moral attitude which characterises human consciousness, but, as we saw, it denied an immediate apprehension of value with the result that Dewey is lead to formulate a subjective view of moral value, regarding it as wholly determined by the success, which a line of action, of which it is predicated, has, in satisfactorily disposing of the conflict in one's environment, understood in the biological sense, or by the psychological effects (in the way of sublimation or suppression of competing desires) that a line of action of which it is predicated, has upon the agent in question in each situation as ^{it} occurs. This seems to be but a parallel in the realm of Ethics to that subjectiveism and scepticism which we/

we found to characterise his Logic, and which we noted, prevented Dewey from passing beyond the self and its mental states to the objectively real. This same psychological doctrine which denies the capacity for immediate apprehension, it will be remembered, also lead Dewey in his Logic to adopt a nominalistic view with regard to concepts which in its turn we found lead to his view regarding moral ideals, and to his denial of the Summum Bonum. In the end, then, it would appear, that if Dewey's ethical theory is at fault, it is his biological Psychology and nominalistic Logic that are to blame, and since his nominalism itself appears to be, as we have seen, but the result of his Psychology, it would appear that the entire trouble with his ethical theory arises as a result of attempting to interpret the facts of the moral consciousness on a non-moral biological level.

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